

Survey of Christian Theology.12

Apologetics



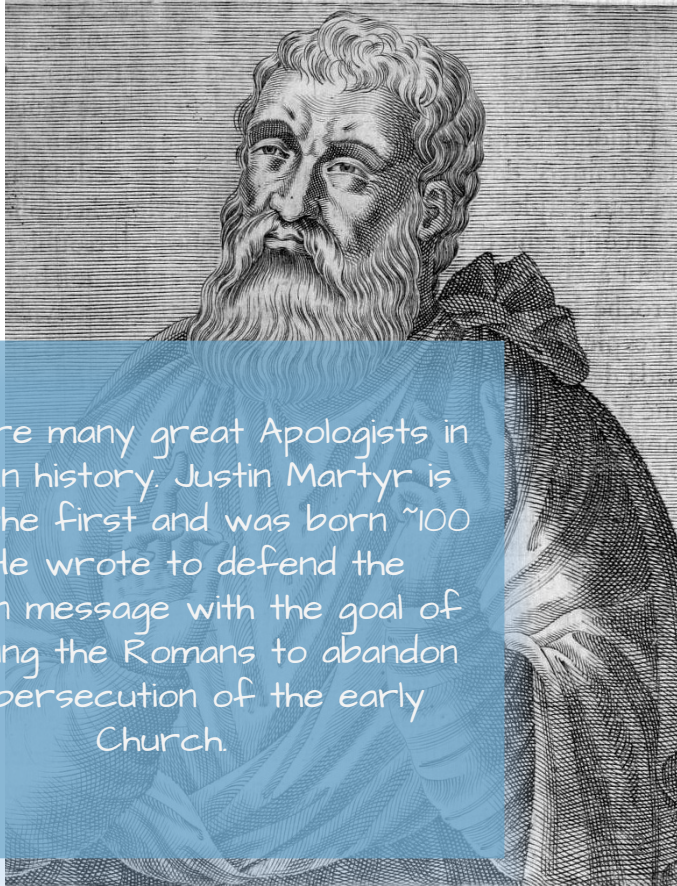
Introduction

"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense (**ἀπολογία**) to everyone who asks you a reason for the *hope* that is in you, with meekness and fear." 1 Peter 3:15

A verbal defense, particularly in a court of law.

"A demonstration of the correctness of an argument" Alister

McGrath. "Mere Apologetics." Baker Publishing Group. Apple Books.

A detailed black and white engraving of Justin Martyr, an early Christian apologist. He is depicted from the chest up, facing slightly to the left. He has a full, curly beard and hair, and is wearing a dark, draped garment. The background is a simple, textured grey.

There are many great Apologists in Christian history. Justin Martyr is one of the first and was born ~100 AD. He wrote to defend the Christian message with the goal of convincing the Romans to abandon their persecution of the early Church.

Introduction *(continued)*



“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 **contend earnestly** for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints. For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.” Jude 3-4

Σπουδή - move quickly, properly, swiftness to show *zealous diligence*, giving one's best and full effort, intensity, *obeying* what the Lord reveals as *His priority*. This elevates the *more important* over the important.

Ἐπαγωνίζομαι - focused on, a contest, competition, to contend properly or struggle with *skill* and commitment

Alister E. McGrath. "Mere Apologetics." Baker Publishing Group. Apple Books.

Introduction *(continued)*

The goal of apologetics is always the furtherance of the gospel for the glory of God.

First step in Apologetics is developing a "discipleship of the mind" within the Christian *and* the Christian community.

DEFENDING

Assess challenges, find barriers, and uncover misunderstandings to the Christian faith and help to remove them.

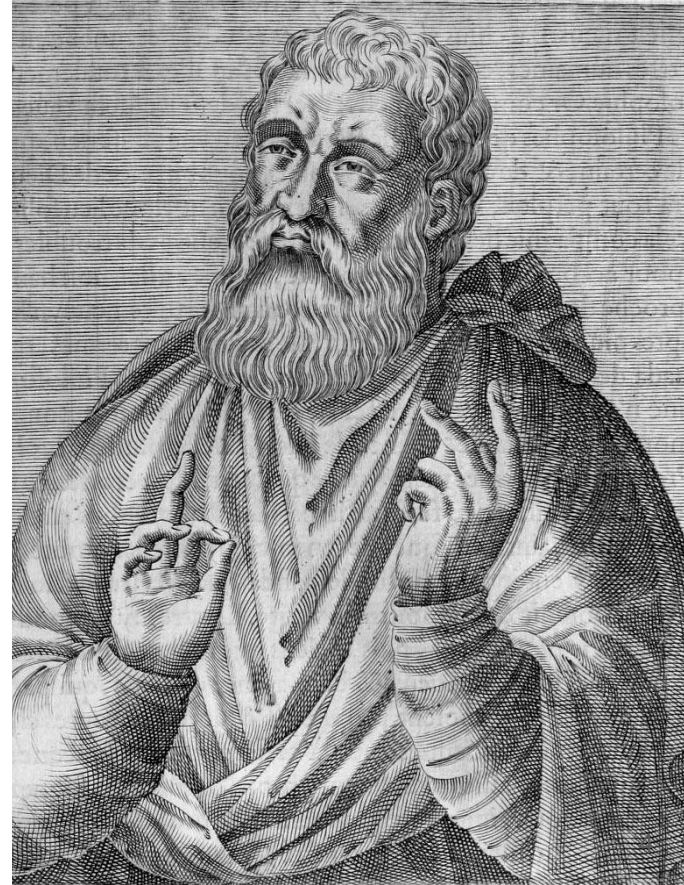
COMMENDING

Set out the attractiveness of Christianity and help others to understand the relevance of the Christian faith to their life.

TRANSLATING

Explain Christianity in language that can be understood by one's audience because the Christian message is unfamiliar to many.

Alister E. McGrath. "Mere Apologetics." Baker Publishing Group. Apple Books.



Introduction *(continued)*



"It (apologetics) commends a mindset of engagement, encouraging Christians to interact with the ideas of our culture rather than running away from them or pretending they can be ignored."

"Apologetics is to be seen not as a defensive and hostile reaction against the world."

With apologetics, we enter a relay race and have the great thoughts and arguments from robust thinkers of the past handed over to us, to defend, enhance, and use to advance the message of our lord Jesus Christ!

Alister E. McGrath. "Mere Apologetics." Baker Publishing Group. Apple Books.

Introduction *(continued)*

"For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, **casting down arguments** and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ," 2 Corinthians 10:5

"Holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and **convict** {**Ελέγχω** - to properly convince with solid, compelling evidence, especially to expose, to prove wrong} those who contradict." Titus 1:9

"I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. 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** {**ἀπολογία**} and **confirming** {**βεβαίωσις**- present what upholds and sustains, that which is for sure, to validate as guaranteed} the gospel, all of you share in God's grace with me. God can testify how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus."
Philippians 1:3-8



Introduction *(continued)*

"Playing Offense - How Chirstian Common Law Arguments work in Public Apologetics" Andrew T Walker / "The Changing Face of Apologetics in a Secular Age" R Albert Mohler Jr. / Southern Seminary Magazine Spring 2022. Vol.90.1. Copyright © 2022, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

- "Reason might be *incomplete* but never *incompatible* with faith."
- "We now face a society that doesnt think it is important if Chriantiy is true or not - they just do not care. And even worse, they think Chistianity is dangerous for people and society to flourish."
- "Traditional apologetics was a valid approach when society was asking questions of Christian thinkers. That is no longer the case in western society."
- "The world is secular, so the Church must adapt its apologetic approaches."



Introduction *(continued)*

- Epistemology doesn't really matter today - how do we know what is true. And society has probably pushed past ontology - what is the nature of reality. Now, most in western societies focus on '*How can I live to flourish*' as each self defines *flourishing*.
- Today in western societies, individuals believe that human beings *just are*, and no more explanation is needed. You now just *encounter* society without ever encountering any thoughts about God.

"Playing Offense - How Christian Common Law Arguments work in Public Apologetics" Andrew T Walker / "The Changing Face of Apologetics in a Secular Age" R Albert Mohler Jr. / Southern Seminary Magazine Spring 2022. Vol.90.1, Copyright © 2022, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary



Some Definitions as We Get Started

Epistemology Steup, Matthias and Ram Neta. 'Epistemology', *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2020 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed), URL - <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2020/entries/epistemology/>>.

The term "epistemology" comes from the Greek words "episteme" and "logos". "Episteme" can be translated as "knowledge", while "logos" can be translated as "reason". Although the term "epistemology" is no more than a couple of centuries old, the field of epistemology is at least as old as any in philosophy. Plato's epistemology was an attempt to understand what it was **to know**, and how knowledge (unlike mere opinion) is good for the knower. Locke's epistemology was an attempt to understand the operations of **human understanding**, Kant's epistemology was an attempt to understand the conditions of the possibility of **human understanding**. Much recent work in formal epistemology is an attempt to understand **how our degrees of confidence are rationally constrained by our evidence**,

Knowledge is among the many kinds of *cognitive success* that epistemology is interested in understanding. I.e., "to know", "**How do you know that to be true?**"



Some Definitions as We Get Started *(continued)*

Ontology Hofweber, Thomas, 'Logic and Ontology', *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2021 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL - <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2021/entries/logic-ontology/>>.

As a first approximation, ontology is the study of **what there is**. Some contest this formulation of what ontology is, so it's only a first approximation. Many classical philosophical problems are problems in ontology: the question **whether or not there is a god, or the problem of the existence of universals**, etc.. One of the troubles with ontology is that it not only isn't clear what there is, it also isn't so clear how to settle questions about what there is, at least not for the kinds of things that have traditionally been of special interest to philosophers. Ontology is thus a philosophical discipline that encompasses, besides the study of what there is and the study of the general features of what there is, the **study of what is involved in settling questions about what there is** in general, especially for the philosophically tricky cases.



Some Definitions as We Get Started *(continued)*

Presupposition Beaver, David I., Bart Geurts, and Kristie Denlinger, "Presupposition", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2021 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL - <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2021/entries/presupposition/>>.

The phenomenon whereby speakers mark linguistically **information as being taken for granted**, rather than being part of the main propositional content of a speech act. Speakers take a lot for granted. That is, *they presuppose information*.

Once an unsuspecting listener accepts the initial statement as truth (but in fact is presupposed to be true) then the speaker leads the listener to accept statements as true, even though they are not.

"When did you stop stealing melons from the grocery store?" or "Since you are going to the store please buy me some melons" (But I am not going to the store)



Some Definitions as We Get Started *(continued)*

Correspondence Theory of Truth David, Marian, 'The Correspondence Theory of Truth', The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Summer 2022 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed), URL - <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2022/entries/truth-correspondence/>>.

Any view explicitly embracing the idea that **truth consists in a relation to reality**, i.e., that truth is a relational property involving a characteristic relation to some portion of reality. Its traditional competitors, pragmatist, as well as coherentist, verificationist, and other epistemic theories of truth, are often associated with idealism, anti-realism, or relativism. Correspondence theories of truth -It has become customary to talk of **truth-bearers** whenever one wants to stay neutral between these choices.

Spoken or written statements correspond to the real state of affairs in the universe. WJS



Limitations of, and Risks to Apologetics

The background of the slide features a stack of books on the left and a wooden gavel resting on its sound block on the right. The books have red and gold covers, and the gavel is made of dark wood with a silver band. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the textures of the books and the gavel.

"In Christianity you are not faced merely with an argument which demands assent, but with a person who demands your confidence." C. S. Lewis

The Christian faith is not the mere addition of one extra item to our inventory of the contents of our worldview. It is a qualitative leap, an embracing of a new mode of existence. Søren Kierkegaard

Limitations of, and Risks to Apologetics *(continued)*

- "Apologetics is a channel to reduce hurdles to the Gospel, it is not the gospel itself."
- "One runs the risk of showing the reasonability of the Christian faith is all that is required. Apologetics is showing that the boat can be trusted - evangelism leads to the expression of faith by stepping into the boat and launching out from shore." Alister E. McGrath. "Mere Apologetics." Baker Publishing Group. Apple Books.
- With Apologetics, one may win the argument but lose the relationship.
- One might fail to understand the context of their current culture and therefore fail to adjust their approach to apologetics



Modernism & Postmodernism

Different beliefs about the universe lead to different behaviour.

Modernity (~1750s ~ 1960s) Both a historic period and the socio-cultural outlook on life. Modernity intersects with the Enlightenment. This new age of reason, so the belief and expectation held, would advance beyond what had been possible in the classical period. A belief in the potential of technological progress. The Social Sciences are formalized, individualism, urbanization, democracies, and capitalism ascend - along with antithetical developments such as Marxism.

Apologetics developed prior to the 1960s generally was designed to engage modernity with logic and rational thinking. The challenge was to not allow this logical approach to diminish the elements of faith within Christianity.

Postmodernism appeared on the scene in the 1960s with the premise that *Modernity had failed* and needed to be corrected. Postmodernity is generally based on scepticism of the ideologies and approaches of the Enlightenment *and* Faith. Postmodern thought carries the clear tendencies to *self-consciousness, self-referentiality, moral relativism, and rejection of dialogue.*

e.g., *"It is true for me!"*

Modernism & Postmodernism *(continued)*

Deconstruction is an approach to understanding the relationship between text and meaning. Deconstruction argues that language, especially ... concepts such as truth and justice, are irreducibly complex, unstable, or impossible to determine. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deconstruction>

Postmodernism also posits that the concept of *uniformitarianism* (which is the assumption that the natural laws and processes that operate in our present-day observations have always operated in the universe and apply everywhere) is to be seen as a straightjacket on one's thinking. Truth, to the Postmodernist, is simply the story told by those in power to retain their power.

In Postmodernism, the ideas that undergird many aspects of our society today that take logic and dialogue are removed from the the structure of relationships; and this leads to confusion, disorder, and hostility. This confusion, disorder, and hostility allow the Postmodernist to advance their positions more aggressively.

Modernism & Postmodernism *(continued)*

In an environment of such seismic shifts in society's undergirding worldview, the traditional approaches to Christian Apologetics need to be augmented and enhanced.

"There is no need for Christian apologists to be alarmed by the risk of postmodernity. The Christian faith possesses ample resources to meet this challenge." Alister E. McGrath. "Mere Apologetics." Baker Publishing Group. Apple Books.

"Incarnational Apologetics" may be most effective to those shackled to postmodernist ideologies - i.e., life just works better for those people who have built their life on the foundation of God's Word. I.e., living a redeemed life!



World View

“Worldviews are broadly based attempts at acquiring a unified perspective on life. An estimation of what, in life, is valuable and worth preserving.” <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/dilthey/#DiltRefEthiWorlHisDoubAboutMeta>

“A worldview is the fundamental cognitive orientation of an individual or society encompassing the whole of the individual's or society's knowledge and point of view.”

“The term worldview is a translation of the German word Weltanschauung, composed of Welt ('world') and Anschauung ('perception' or 'view'). It is a concept fundamental to German philosophy, especially epistemology, and refers to a wide world perception. Additionally, it refers to the framework of ideas and beliefs forming a global description through which an individual, group or culture watches and interprets the world and interacts with it.” <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Worldview>

One's unconscious frame through which they see and interpret the world - the framework one uses to make sense of the world; to get past cognitive dissonance to an internal sense of comfort to understand why things are the way they are. WJS



World View

“If the **world** hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the **world**, the **world** would love its own. Yet because you are not of the **world**, but I chose you out of the **world**, therefore the **world** hates you. Remember the **word** that I said to you, ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also. But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because they do not know Him who sent Me.”

John 15:18-21

World Views

(continued)



Atheist			Monotheist			Pantheist		
It's illogical to believe in God - look at the evil that religious people have and continue to cause. Trust in human reason to develop moral standards, advance knowledge, and guide society			"Getting to God cannot be as easy as you say!" Fellowship with a personal & loving God by grace thru faith			There cannot be <i>one</i> truth! My truth (which may change tomorrow) is what matters today! Spirits/the Force can provide secret knowledge.		
Enlightenment	Agnostics & Atheists	Haters of God	Deists	Compliance	Christians	god(s) is/are nature	god(s) is/are spirits/force	Pagans
"And they said, 'Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top is in the heavens; let us make a name for ourselves.'" Genesis 11:4a	"The fool has said in his heart, 'There is no God.'" Psalm 14:1(a) "In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes." Judges 21:25	"Backbiters, <i>haters of God</i> , violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents," Romans 1:30 "Know that it hated Me before it hated you" John 15:18b	"Am I a God near at hand," says the LORD, "And not a God afar off?" Jeremiah 23:23 "God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble." Psalm 46:1	"I hate, I despise your feast days, And I do not savor your sacred assemblies," Amos 5:21 "But without faith it is impossible to please Him," Hebrews 6:1a	"Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.'" John 14:6 "Casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, 2 Corinthians 10:5	"Who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature/creation rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen." Romans 1:25	"for as I was passing through and considering the objects of your worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO THE UNKNOWN GOD." Acts 17:23	"They provoked Him to jealousy with foreign gods; With abominations they provoked Him to anger. They sacrificed to demons, not to God, To gods they did not know. To new gods, new arrivals." De 32:16-17 "..that a certain slave girl possessed with a spirit of divination met us, who brought her masters much profit..." Acts 16:16

World Views

(continued)



Atheist			Monotheist			Pantheist		
It's illogical to believe in God - look at the evil that religious people have and continue to cause. Trust in human reason to develop moral standards, advance knowledge, and guide society			Range from the self-reliance of a Deist to a Believer who leans on God and seeks to see all of life from God's perspective			There cannot be <i>one</i> truth! My truth (which may change tomorrow) is what matters today! Spirits/the Force can provide secret knowledge.		
Enlightenment	Agnostics & Atheists	Haters of God	Deists		Christians	god(s) is/are nature	god(s) is/are spirits/force	Pagans
Materialism - the physical world, science, self-reliance, and the markets are all that matter.			<p>"Am I a God near at hand," says the LORD, "And not a God afar off?" Jeremiah 23:23</p> <p>"God is our refuge and strength. A very present help in trouble." Psalm 46:1</p>	<p>"I hate, I despise your feast days, And I do not savor your sacred assemblies." Amos 5:21</p> <p>"But without faith it is impossible to please Him," Hebrews 6:1a</p>	<p>"Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.'" John 14:6</p> <p>"Casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ." 2 Corinthians 10:5</p>	Gnosticism - Human beings contain a piece of the god(s) and as such there is a continuous search for secret knowledge, and supernatural power. "What is true for me." (postmodernists)		
<p>"No king ever man did that which was right in his own eyes." Judges 21:25</p> <p>"Know that it hated Me before it hated you" John 15:18b</p>						<p>"...altar with inscription: TO THE UNKNOWN GOD." Acts 17:23</p> <p>blessed forever. Amen." Romans 1:25</p>	<p>"To gods they are know. To new gods, new arrivals." De 32:16-17</p> <p>"...that a certain slave girl possessed with a spirit of divination met us, who brought her masters much profit..." Acts 16:16</p>	



“But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always **be ready to give a defense** (ἀπολογία) to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear.” 1 Peter 3:15

“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 **contend earnestly for the faith** which was once for all delivered to the saints. For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.” Jude 3-4

Thinking Like an Apologist

1. Having a solid understanding of your Christian faith
2. Understanding the worldview of the audience to whom you are presenting the gospel
3. Finding points of contact
4. Communicating with clarity
5. Clearing away the rubble in another's thinking
6. Presenting the whole counsel of God

Alister E. McGrath. "Mere Apologetics." Baker Publishing Group. Apple



Biblical Truths for the Apologist

We often seek philosophical points to earnestly discuss when discussing Apologetics - but we should not forget that the Scripture never returns void. These passages are great tools for the Christian apologist so that we are always at the ready to give an answer!



Unity

"By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." John 13:35



Nature

"For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse,"
Romans 1:20

"The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork." Psalm 19:1



Personal Testimony

"Therefore, having obtained help from God, to this day I stand, **witnessing** both to small and great, saying no other things than those which the prophets and Moses said would come." Acts 26:22

But he (Paul) said, "I am not mad, most noble Festus, but speak the words of truth and reason ... Then Agrippa said to Paul, "You almost **persuade** me to become a Christian." Acts 26:25,28

Biblical Truths for the Apologist *(continued)*



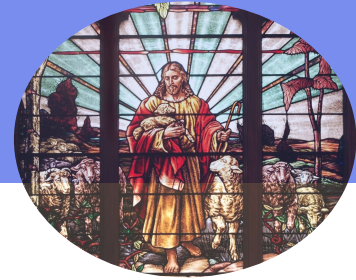
Groping for God

So that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us. Acts 17:27



Good Works

Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation. 1 Peter 2:11,12



Impact of God's Word & Prayer

So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it. Isaiah 55:11

Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest. Matthew 9:38



Historicity of the New Testament

1. General Tests

- a. Historiography is a branch of study which focuses on the logical, conceptual, and epistemological aspects of what historians do. Critical historiography studies, among other things, the different tests which should be applied to a document to determine whether or not it is historically reliable. When many of these tests are applied to the New Testament documents, they show themselves to be as reliable as, or superior to, most other ancient documents.

J. P. Moreland. "Scaling the Secular City." Baker Publishing Group, 2012-09-08. Apple Books.

1. General Tests *(continued)*

- b. Bibliographical - how many manuscript copies exist and how far removed they are in time from the originals. For many ancient historical works we possess only a handful of manuscripts which are on average about 1,000 years removed from the originals.

J. P. Moreland. "Scaling the Secular City." Baker Publishing Group, 2012-09-08. Apple Books.



Historicity of the New
Testament *(continued)*



Historicity of the New Testament *(continued)*

1. General Tests *(continued)*

- c. In contrast to this, the New Testament documents have a staggering quantity of manuscript attestation. Approximately 5,000 Greek manuscripts, containing all or part of the New Testament, exist. There are 8,000 manuscript copies of the Vulgate (a Latin translation of the Bible done by Jerome from 382–405) and more than 350 copies of Syriac (Christian Aramaic) versions of the New Testament (these originated from 150–250 AD; most of the copies are from the 400s). Besides this, virtually the entire New Testament could be reproduced from citations contained in the works of the early church fathers. There are some thirty-two thousand citations in the writings of the Fathers prior to the Council of Nicea (325). The dates of the manuscript copies range from early in the second century to the time of the Reformation. Many of the manuscripts are early—for example, the John Rylands manuscript (about 120AD; it was found in Egypt and contains a few verses from the Gospel of John), the Chester Beatty Papyri (200AD; contains major portions of the New Testament), Codex Sinaiticus (350 AD; contains virtually all of the New Testament), and Codex Vaticanus (325–350 AD; it contains almost the entire Bible).

J. P. Moreland. "Scaling the Secular City." Baker Publishing Group, 2012-09-08. Apple Books.

- 1. General Tests *(continued)*
 - d. A document has higher probability of veracity if it is a personal letter - as much of the New Testament is.
 - e. A document also has a higher probability of veracity if it is a bit unpolished in terms of its style - as much of the New Testament is.
 - f. Archeological confirmation exists to the historical reliability to the New Testament

J. P. Moreland. "Scaling the Secular City." Baker Publishing Group, 2012-09-08. Apple Books.



Historicity of the New Testament *(continued)*

Historicity of the New Testament *(continued)*

2. Presence of Eyewitnesses

- a. The New Testament is written by eyewitnesses which is regarded as prima facie evidence of historicity.
- b. The writers of the New Testament did not know, nor do the texts indicate they are written by someone intending to have a major impact on Judaism.
- c. The eyewitnesses who were the writers of the New Testament suffered expulsion from Judaism and in many cases death without adjusting their testimony.
- d. Early Christianity started in Jerusalem and it took the persecution of the Church to spread. If the eyewitness accounts of Jesus' life and teachings were not true, then how and why would the Church have grown near Jerusalem. Others would simply have stated they knew this Jesus and what you are hearing is not true.

3. Marks of Historicity

- a. The New Testament narratives and letters each have a unique style due to writers bringing his own approach and unique set of words - this is common to their portion of the narratives and letters.
- b. Jesus taught in parables and this is unique in the scripture. And the writers of the New Testament letters did not continue with the use of parables but each writes in his own style. This is as expected if the New Testament is a historical collection of narratives and letters written by independent authors with a wonderfully consistent theme owing to the inspiration by the Holy Spirit.

J. P. Moreland. "Scaling the Secular City." Baker Publishing Group, 2012-09-08. Apple Books.



Historicity of the New
Testament *(continued)*



Historicity of the New Testament *(continued)*

3. Marks of Historicity *(continued)*

- c. “The Church failed to put into the Synoptic tradition material that would have helped the Church a great deal during the period when the tradition was passed on orally. W. Manson has said it well:
‘The Pauline letters abound in utterances which could easily be transferred to Jesus and presented to the world as oracles of the Lord. How many are? None. It seems a little odd that, if the story of Jesus was the creation of the Christian community, no use should have been made of the admirable materials offered by one of the most able, active, and influential members of the community.’”

J. P. Moreland. "Scaling the Secular City." Baker Publishing Group, 2012-09-08. Apple Books.

3. Marks of Historicity *(continued)*

- d. "If a document contains features which are embarrassing or counterproductive to the purpose for which it was written, then it has a high probability of being historical. There would be no sufficient reason other than their facticity for including such features." (e.g., women as the first to the tomb, difficult sayings of Jesus, cowardly behaviour of early Church leaders)
- e. "We cannot detect any evolutionary development of Christology within Paul's letters themselves. His later letters have substantially the same Christology as his earlier letters. Thus, Paul's static Christology must have been largely completed before he began his great missionary journeys when he began to teach his Christological views; that is, by 48AD. From Paul's letters we can infer that the picture of a fully divine, miracle-working Jesus was **not** one that developed several decades after his death."

J. P. Moreland. "Scaling the Secular City." Baker Publishing Group, 2012-09-08. Apple Books.



Historicity of the New
Testament *(continued)*

Historicity of the New Testament *(continued)*

4. The New Testament Timeline - *When was the New Testament written?*

The Acts of the Apostles was written after the Gospel of Luke - therefore the synoptic gospels were written before the Acts of the Apostles.

The Acts of the Apostles do not mention anything about the fall of Jerusalem in 70AD, Paul's execution 64AD, Nero's persecution in the mid 60s, Peter's execution in 65 AD, nor James execution in 61 AD.

Therefore the Acts of the Apostles was most likely written in the late 50s which is only 17 years after the crucifixion.

The synoptic gospels were therefore written in the period ~15 years after the death and resurrection of Jesus. And this would mean that many eye witnesses would still be alive and familiar to the Disciples and broader Jewish community - and such eye witnesses could and would have easily refuted the disciples claims of Christ's life, ministry, and resurrection.

Yet there are no extant sources of such refutations of the claims of the Synoptic Gospels

The Resurrection



For I know that my
Redeemer lives,
And He shall stand at last
on the earth,
And after my skin is
destroyed, this I know,
That in my flesh I shall see
God,
Whom I shall see for
myself,
And my eyes shall behold,
and not another.
How my heart yearns
within me.
Job 19:25-27

“The resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth from the dead is the foundation upon which the Christian faith is built.”

J. P. Moreland. “Scaling the Secular City.” Baker Publishing Group, 2012-09-08. Apple Books.

“Now if Christ is preached that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen. And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty. Yes, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He did not raise up—if in fact the dead do not rise. For if the dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen. And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins! Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable. 1 Corinthians 15:12-19


The Resurrection - The Historicity of the Empty Tomb

Jewish View of the Resurrection

"It is generally accepted that Jewish beliefs about the afterlife included the concept of a physical resurrection of the body."

"It is clear that the resurrection of Jesus was preached very shortly after his crucifixion, most likely within several weeks. Given the contemporary beliefs about resurrection, the tomb of Jesus had to have been empty. Had there been no empty tomb, there would have been no belief in a resurrection and no preaching of the resurrection. Thus, the early preaching is evidence that the tomb was empty."

J. P. Moreland. "Scaling the Secular City." Baker Publishing Group, 2012-09-08. Apple Books



For You will not leave my soul in
Sheol,

Nor will You allow Your Holy One
to see corruption.

Psalm 16:10

The Resurrection - The Historicity of the Empty Tomb *(continued)*



"Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne, he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption. This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses."

Acts 2:29-32

Mutual Acceptance of the Empty Tomb

"...the absence of explicit mention of the empty tomb in the speeches in Acts is best explained by noting that the fact of the empty tomb was not in dispute and thus it was not at issue. The main debate was over why it was empty, not whether it was empty. In Acts 2:29, Peter makes a reference to the fact that David's tomb was still with them. The implication seems to be that David was buried and remained in his tomb, but by contrast, Jesus did not remain in his tomb, as anyone listening to the speech could verify for himself."

The Resurrection - The Historicity of the Empty Tomb *(continued)*

Time and Place of the First Preaching

First preaching of the resurrection is within 7 weeks. If there was no resurrection the remains of Jesus would simply have been produced from Joseph of Arimathea's tomb.

No Veneration at Jesus' Tomb

"In Palestine during the days of Jesus, at least fifty tombs of prophets or other holy persons served as sites of religious worship and veneration. However, there is no good evidence that such a practice was ever associated with Jesus' tomb. Since this was customary, and since Jesus was a fitting object of veneration, why were such religious activities not conducted at his tomb? The most reasonable answer must be that Jesus' body was not in his tomb, and thus the tomb was not regarded as an appropriate site for such veneration."

J. P. Moreland. "Scaling the Secular City." Baker Publishing Group, 2012-09-08. Apple Books.



The Resurrection - The Historicity of the Empty Tomb *(continued)*



No Other Burial Story Exists

"If the burial account in the New Testament is not reliable, then it is surprising that other accounts are nowhere to be found. Why were there not several different accounts which tried to specify the details of the burial? No conflicting account is found anywhere, even among Jewish writings, where one would expect to find an alternative account. Further, if the New Testament account is false, why did not some fragment of the true account remain? The presence of just one account of Jesus' burial points to the fact that it must have been known to be accurate. No other account was made which could rival the true account."

J. P. Moreland. "Scaling the Secular City." Baker Publishing Group, 2012-09-08. Apple Books.

The Resurrection - The Historicity of the Empty Tomb *(continued)*

The Reference to Joseph of Arimathea

Joseph of Arimathea is described as a rich man and rich folks (archeology reveals) would have owned a rolling stone tomb. Also, due to Joseph prominence in the community many people, especially those of the Sanhedrin of which Joseph was a member, would have known the location of his tomb and could have easily pointed out that the tomb still contained the body of Jesus.

J. P. Moreland. "Scaling the Secular City." Baker Publishing Group, 2012-09-08. Apple Books.



The Resurrection - The Historicity of the Empty Tomb *(continued)*



The Continuous Account of the Passion

"Each part of the narrative would **not** make sense without the others and thus the narrative was most likely one unified piece prior to its inclusion in the Gospel." And the presentation of the Resurrection is continuous from the beginning of the Christian faith and Christians have not wavered (even those who claimed to be eye witnesses under threat of death) from the testimony of the Resurrection.

J. P. Moreland. "Scaling the Secular City" Baker Publishing Group, 2012-09-08. Apple Books.

The Resurrection - The Historicity of the Empty Tomb *(continued)*

The Presence of Women

"If someone were going to make up an account of the first witnesses to the empty tomb and the risen Christ, why would women be chosen instead of the disciples? This serves only to make the disciples look cowardly and the women look courageous."

"In first-century Judaism, a woman's testimony was virtually worthless. A woman was not allowed to give testimony in a court of law except on rare occasions. No one would have invented a story and made women the first witnesses to the empty tomb."

J. P. Moreland. "Scaling the Secular City." Baker Publishing Group, 2012-09-08. Apple Books.



The Resurrection - The Historicity of the Empty Tomb *(continued)*



The Accounts of the Tomb

The specific descriptions of the Tomb as found in the New Testament are consistent with the archeological and historical evidence of the types of tombs that wealthy would have used at the time of Jesus. This level of specificity argues for the fact that the Apostles did not simply invent a story.

Also the tombs of several wealthy members of the Sandrehin are historically known to be near the North Wall of Jerusalem. And this is evidence that the body of Christ could **not** have easily been stolen without observation.

J. P. Moreland. "Scaling the Secular City." Baker Publishing Group, 2012-09-08. Apple Books.

The Resurrection - The Historicity of the Empty Tomb *(continued)*

The Presence of a Jewish Polemic

"... the Jewish polemic does not dispute that the tomb was empty; it gives an alternate explanation. This is a significant historical fact. The only explanations for the resurrection of Jesus for which we have evidence assume an empty tomb, regardless of whether the explanation is offered by a friend or a foe of Christianity. This is strong evidence that the tomb was in fact empty."

J. P. Moreland. "Scaling the Secular City." Baker Publishing Group, 2012-09-08. Apple Books.



The Resurrection - The Historicity of the Empty Tomb *(continued)*



Absence of Theological Reflection

The accounts of the resurrection in the New Testament are simply that - historical narratives of what happened with the recorded response of surprise. If an event was concocted it would most likely include the theological motifs of the church. In short, the narrative is an early record of just what happened and does not indicate embellishment or theological reflection.

J. P. Moreland. "Scaling the Secular City." Baker Publishing Group, 2012-09-08. Apple Books.

The Resurrection - The Historicity of the Empty Tomb *(continued)*

Difficulty in Harmonizing the Gospel Narratives

"The conflict of testimony is more a mark of the sincerity of those from whom the testimony was derived than a mark against their veracity. The differences can be best explained by treating them as different reports coming from different points of view as described by different eyewitnesses."

The gospel narratives do not contain signs of an attempt to *create* a story - but simply to reflect what eye witnesses had seen and subsequently recorded.

J. P. Moreland. "Scaling the Secular City." Baker Publishing Group, 2012-09-08. Apple Books.



The Resurrection - The Appearances *(continued)*

Summary of Historicity:

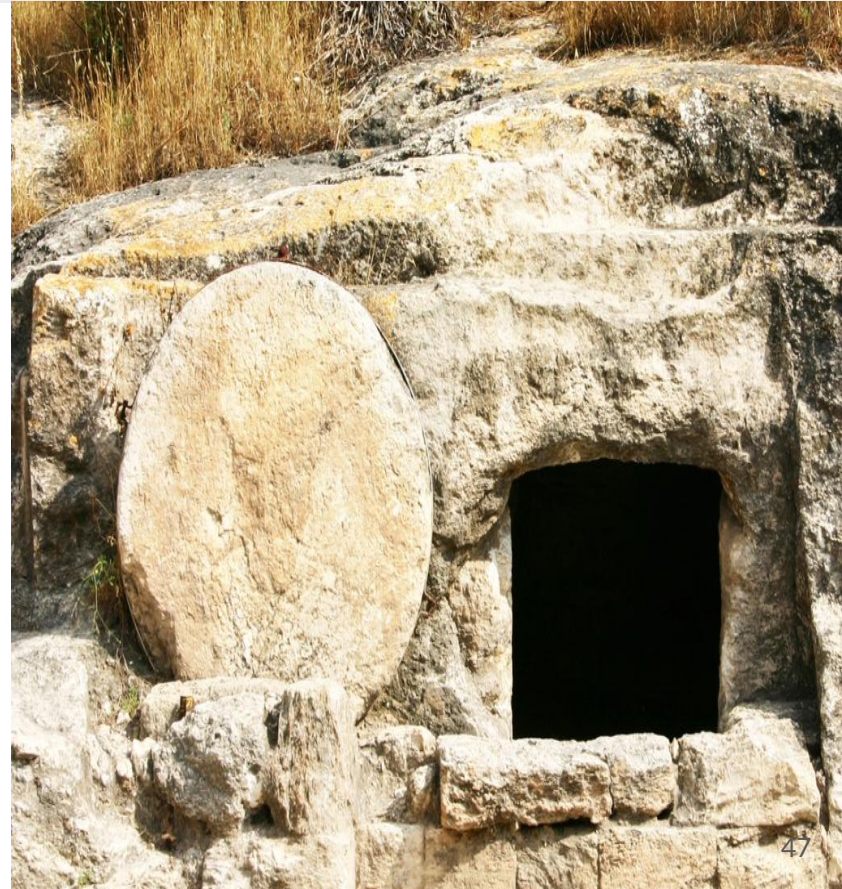
Paul had nothing to gain and everything to lose by testifying to the risen Christ which is strong evidence for the resurrection.

Women were the first to testify of the resurrection and women held little if any statute as witnesses. In fact using a woman as a witness could be a negative to the fact you were attempting to prove. The early church, unless these are actual historical accounts, would therefore not have documented women as the first to witness the risen Christ.

The documentation in the gospel narrative are not easy to reconcile. If the early church was attempting to *create i.e., contrive*, a narrative they would have undoubtedly been careful to make the stories fit much better.

Any one attempting to create a myth will speak with language more fanciful than the resurrection narratives in the Gospel in order to capture the imagination

J. P. Moreland. "Scaling the Secular City," Baker Publishing Group, 2012-09-08. Apple Books.



The Resurrection - The Appearances



Nature of the appearances

They occur to several different individuals and groups of individuals.

They all (except for Sts Paul and John) took place within 40 days of the crucifixion.

The appearance are not just to the disciples ("After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep. After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles. Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time." 1 Corinthians 15:6-8)

They are in bodily form although that bodily form is suited for a difference heavenly mode of existence.

The Resurrection - The Early Church

The Disciples - It is difficult to explain their transformation and consistent commitment without the resurrection.

Change in Key Social Structures and Beliefs - The early church was comprised of converted Jews and they quite quickly moved away from the system of sacrifices, the Law, moving the Sabbath to Sunday, and adoption of Trinitarian monotheism.

Such radical shifts in such a short period of time require an explanation, and the explanation that is rationale and stands up to the test is the resurrection.

Sacraments & the Church itself- It is difficult to explain their transformation and consistent commitment without the resurrection.



The Resurrection - The Appearances *(continued)*



Predisposition of the Disciples:

Due to the power and influence of both Rome and the Jewish religious hierarchy, the Disciples were crushed and frightened at the time of the crucifixion. And there is no evidence of them desiring to start a new religion.

To create a false narrative the Disciples would have undoubtedly kept their so-called resurrection appearances just amongst themselves to "keep their story straight".

J. P. Moreland. "Scaling the Secular City" Baker Publishing Group, 2012-09-08. Apple Books.

The Resurrection - The Appearances *(continued)*

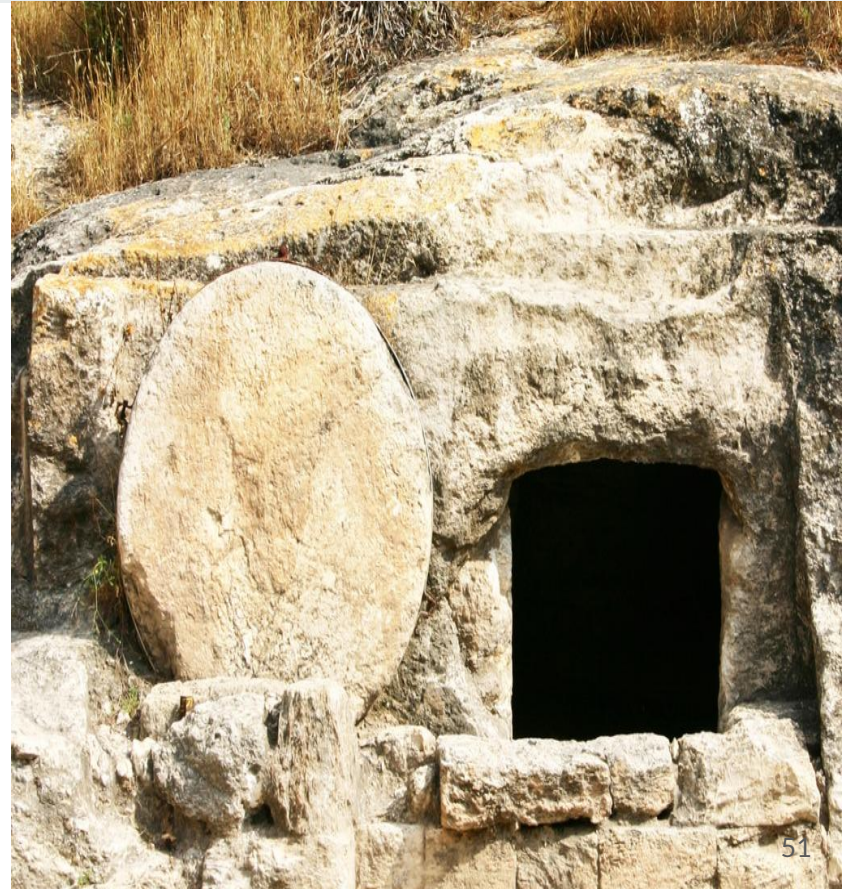
Hallucinations:

Since the disciples were not in a state of mind to expect a resurrection their psyche would not have lent itself to hallucinations.

Hallucinations would not have been interpreted and recorded by the disciples as a resurrected Christ, but merely as spiritual comfort that He is spiritually present with them and for them.

Hallucinations in all other circumstance serve to support subconscious beliefs and they are not interpreted in an entirely new way.

J. P. Moreland. "Scaling the Secular City." Baker Publishing Group, 2012-09-08. Apple Books.



The Resurrection - The Appearances *(continued)*



Hallucinations *(continued)*

Over time and reflexion, especially under the weight of being ostracized, persecuted, and executed - people revert to questioning their own so called eyewitness accounts and acquiesce to the view of the authorities. This is not the case for the Disciples or early believers.

J. P. Moreland. "Scaling the Secular City." Baker Publishing Group, 2012-09-08. Apple Books.

The Resurrection - Explaining the Empty Tomb

It is not uncommon for agnostics or atheists and those hostile to Christianity to say that Jesus' disciples simply stole the body of Jesus to support their false narrative of a Resurrection they planned to create. The rebuttal to this, however, seems quite obvious:

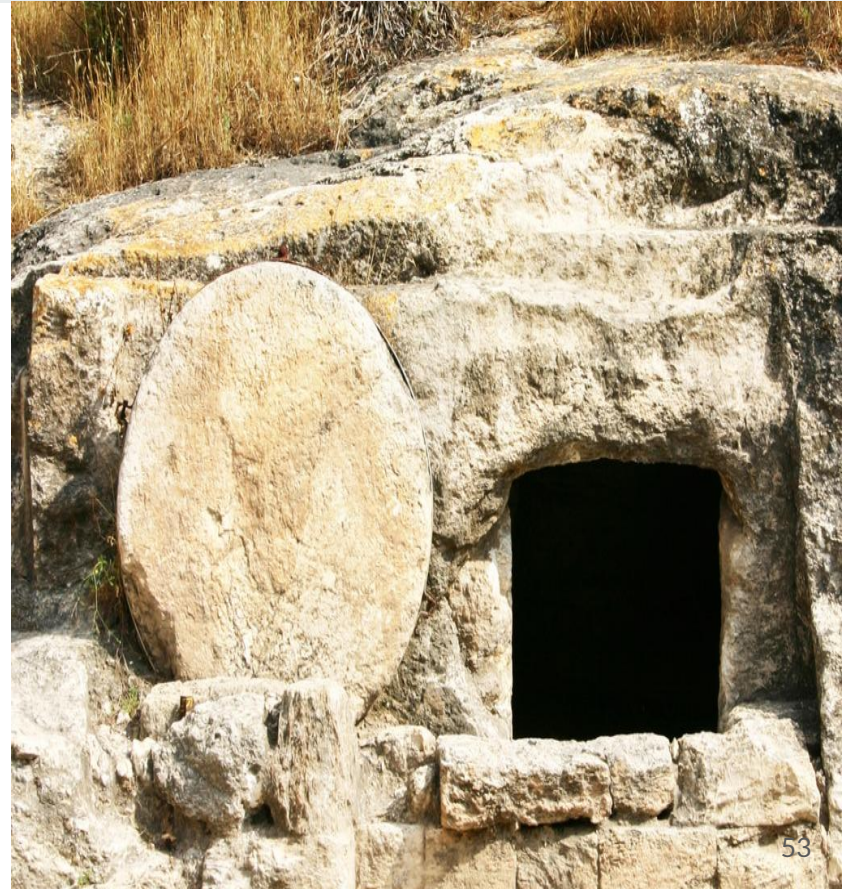
The tomb was sealed and guarded making a theft unlikely.

"The disciples had nothing to gain by lying and starting a new religion. They faced hardship, ridicule, hostility, and martyrs' deaths."

"The disciples were Jewish theists. It may seem easy for a modern agnostic to think about making up a new religion for gain. But to a first-century Jew, such an act was tantamount to lying against the God of Israel,

"Jesus was not in keeping with current conceptions of what the Messiah would be ... and it would have been hard to convince others of its truth."

"If the empty tomb and resurrection was a fabrication, why did not at least one of the disciples break away from the rest and start his own version of Christianity? Or why did not at least one of them reveal the fraudulent nature of the whole enterprise? Those who lie for personal gain do not stick together very long, especially when hardship decreases the benefits."



The Resurrection - The Historicity of the Empty Tomb *(continued)*



Presence of Semitisms

"The presence of Semitisms in the narrative shows that it reflects an early Jewish account of an event which was itself witnessed by Jews on Jewish soil. The narrative is not influenced by Hellenistic mythology or religions."

J. P. Moreland. "Scaling the Secular City." Baker Publishing Group, 2012-09-08. Apple Books.



The Reasonableness of Christianity

"I believe in Christianity as I believe the sun has risen; not only because I see it, but because by it I see everything else." C. S. Lewis



The Reasonableness of Christianity *(continued)*

“Christianity makes sense in itself, and has the ability to make sense of everything else. Once the world has been seen through a Christian set of spectacles, the relative inadequacy of other perspectives becomes clear.”

How do we understand the rationality of our faith:

- ❖ “By showing there is a good ... evidential base for the core beliefs of Christianity.”
- ❖ “By showing that, if the Christian faith is true, it makes more sense of reality than its alternatives”

The question in the minds of the atheist or unconverted is, “Does belief in God and the Christian gospel make sense or is it a sad delusion, an opioid to mollify the challenges of life?”

Proof, it turns out even post the Enlightenment, is limited to a very narrow category of statements. Beliefs (what we hold as true, what is most important to our life, and what guides our life) that provide human life beauty, fulfillment, joy, and love, it turns out cannot be *proven* by reason or science.

You do not judge a flashlight/torch by the engineering of the bulb and its use of batteries - but by how it helps you to see your path at night. So to with Christianity - it illuminates a way of life in the midst of a dark and confusing world.

The rationality/reasonableness of Christianity is not its chief theological virtue. We need always remember that the chief theological foundation of Christianity is the crucifixion and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ resulting in forgiveness of sin, freedom from guilt, and an eternal home with Him!

"Human logic may be rationally adequate, but it is also existentially deficient." Logic in itself results in the imprisonment of humanity within the cold walls of rationalism.

Science is a process of inference, a series of observations leading to a hypothesis that "this conclusion" must be true if we are to explain what has been observed. I.e., "inference to the best explanation"

The big picture of life makes more sense when viewed through the lens or world view of the existence of a creator God. Life, as observed, makes more sense if it, and the universe, were designed by a creator God.

A life lived under the guidance of "what can be proved" scientifically is merely to "skim the surface of reality and fail to discover the hidden depths" of life.

Alister E. McGrath. "Mere Apologetics." Baker Publishing Group. Apple Books.



The Reasonableness of Christianity *(continued)*

The new Atheists, however, believe that society needs to break free from “age-old superstitions” i.e., to outgrow the infantile and harmful illusions of Christianity.

But one's quick view of history reveals that Christian societies have been at the forefront of the abolition of slavery, women's rights, eradication of child labor, education, hospitals, charity and the advancement/betterment of society.

The atheist's metanarrative fails to explain anything important in/for life. Even with the Enlightenment and Soviet communism people still have a yearning for religion and their conscience still seeks after God. This is due to two controlling truths of our Christian faith - that man is created in God's image (a yearning for God) and this image is terribly besmirched by sin (separated from God). And this endlessly frustrates the new atheists.

These truths (created in God's image and total depravity due to sin) are the much better explanation of how we act as individuals (pride and selfishness - yet a yearning to be better) and how we act in society (a collective desire to gather in a community of believers).

Sin explains away the naive desire to hold on to a belief in the *goodness of humanity* and goals of *political utopianism*.

In this day of information that can be referred to as a "meteoric shower of facts" it is important to have a foundation, a lense, and a touchstone to be used to interpret and apply those "facts". We need to be able to identify the grand narrative in it all. The principles of Scripture have provided such a lense for over 2,000 years!

Somewhat similar to a judicial proceeding, the evidences of Christianity make more sense than other worldviews. So this evidence allows us to reach the conclusion beyond a reasonable doubt to pursue Christianity.

These "evidences" are presented on the following slides.

Alister E. McGrath. "Mere Apologetics." Baker Publishing Group. Apple Books.

1 - The Origin of the Universe & Creation

The universe came into being in an instant of time, there was a moment it did not exist and then a moment it did.

The atheist position has been that the universe is in itself eternal or that it is “just there” and there is no good reason to debate what or when it was brought into existence.

Since the 1960s the Big Bang theory supported the fact that the universe did in fact have a beginning.



1 - The Origin of the Universe & Creation *(continued)*

"Christian philosopher, William Lane Craig, developed the following line of argument:

Major premise: Whatever begins to exist has a cause.

Minor premise: The universe began to exist (accepted today by virtually every scientist)

Conclusion: Therefore the universe has a cause."

Mere Apologetics, Alister E. McGrath, <https://books.apple.com/us/book/mere-apologetics/id479555290>



2 - A Universe Designed for Life

"The term "fine-tuning" is often used to refer to the scientific realization that the values of certain fundamental cosmological constants and the character of certain initial conditions of the universe appear to have played a decisive role in bringing about the emergence of a particular kind of universe, one within which intelligent life can develop."

If these "constants" were off even slightly from where they in fact are, then the chances for the existence of life would have been destroyed.

Modern day atheists find it troubling that the evidence from contemporary cosmology points to an intelligent designer of the universe.

Mere Apologetics, Alister E. McGrath,
<https://books.apple.com/us/book/mere-apologetics/id479555290>



3 - The Structure of the Physical World



"One of the most significant parallels between the natural sciences and Christian theology is a fundamental conviction that the world is characterized by regularity and intelligibility."

"In Renaissance Europe, the justification for what we today call the scientific approach to inquiry was the belief in a rational God whose created order could be discerned from a careful study of nature."

"Both the *reason within* and the *reason without*—the rationality of the human mind, and that embedded in the deep structure of the universe—have a common origin in a deeper rationality, the *mind of God*."

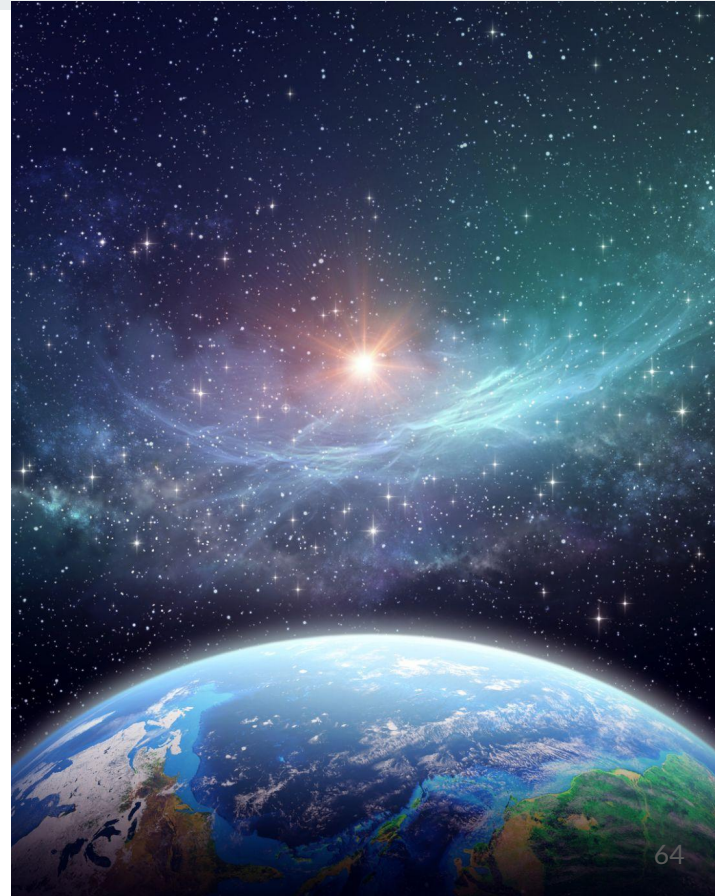
Mere Apologetics, Alister E. McGrath,
<https://books.apple.com/us/book/mere-apologetics/id479555290>

3 - The Structure of the Physical World *(continued)*

"Although science and faith are sometimes presented as being in conflict, it is better to think of faith as offering a deeper *context* to the scientific method. In other words, it offers an explanation of why science works."

"The Christian faith is about grasping the big picture, enabling us to see a larger and nobler vision of reality than human reason can disclose."

Mere Apologetics, Alister E. McGrath,
<https://books.apple.com/us/book/mere-apologetics/id479555290>



4 - A Longing for Justice

"...we are able to use the deep human longing for truth, beauty, and goodness [justice] to help people orient themselves toward their ultimate origin and goal—the living and loving God."

Is morality dependent upon a transcendent norm (i.e., God) or does each individual hold the right to determine what is moral, what is just for themselves, i.e., *their truth*? And how is justice maintained without a transcendent foundation?

If there is no transcendent norm, then we are destined to live in a society in which everyone does what is right in their own eyes.

Can we, as a society, really be shackled to the beliefs and moral stance of those with influence - those in power? If yes, then we are ultimately subject to the morality of Hitler, Stalin, Osama Bin Laden, Pol Pot, Idi Amin, Mao, Nero, and Caligula. We would have no foundational footing to debate those destructive leaders who built their totalitarian groundwork on their moral beliefs, *their truth*.

Mere Apologetics, Alister E. McGrath, <https://books.apple.com/us/book/mere-apologetics/id479555290>



4 - A Longing for Justice *(continued)*



"A historical example will make the force of this point clear. In 1933, the Nazis seized power in Germany and promptly set about using the *law* to impose totalitarian rule. New laws were brought in that enforced Nazi ideology, so the Nazis could claim they used legal means to impose their ideas. The only way of challenging the Nazi approach was to argue that there existed a higher moral authority than the German state. The situation in Germany at this time highlights an issue that cannot be ignored—namely, whether there are transcendent grounds for concepts of morality and justice that are not merely the product of human convention."

Mere Apologetics, Alister E. McGrath,
<https://books.apple.com/us/book/mere-apologetics/id47955290>

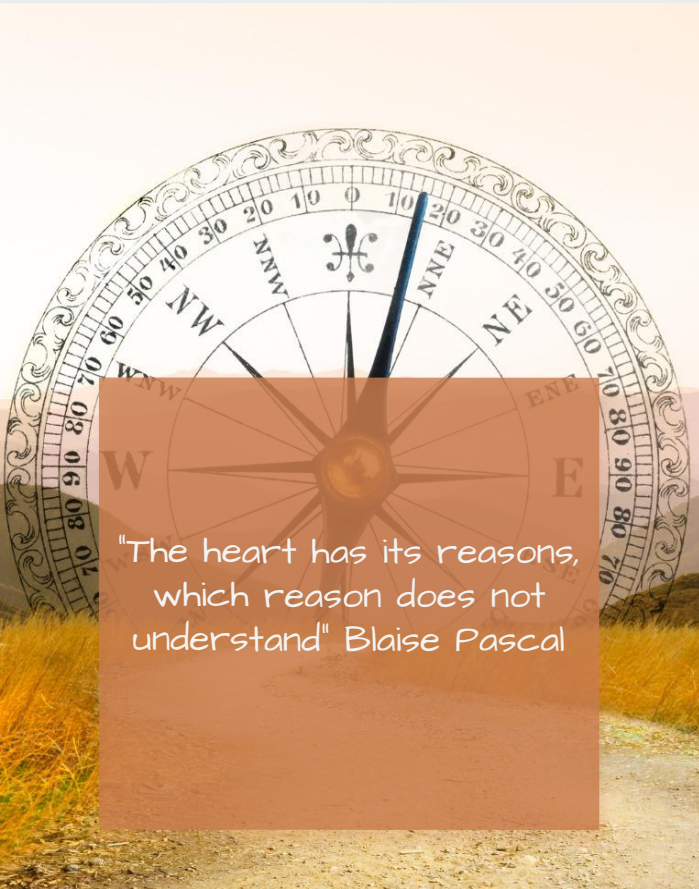
4 - A Longing for Justice *(continued)*

"The best explanation of our deep intuition of the existence of objective moral truths is that there is an Intelligence (a Creator God) behind or beyond nature that implants the knowledge of right and wrong in us and acts as the foundation for the objectivity of our moral judgments."

C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (London: HarperCollins, 2002), 3–8.



5 - A Homing Instinct (*desire*) for God



"The heart has its reasons,
which reason does not
understand" Blaise Pascal

People around the world have a deep yearning for something transcendent - something greater than themselves.

We often observe others and even ourselves seeking earthly accomplishments and pleasures with passion to fulfill this deep yearning. Some turn their passion for social causes, such as global warming, into their personal religion to satisfy this internal yearning.

But one's heart will always be *restless until it finds rest in God!*

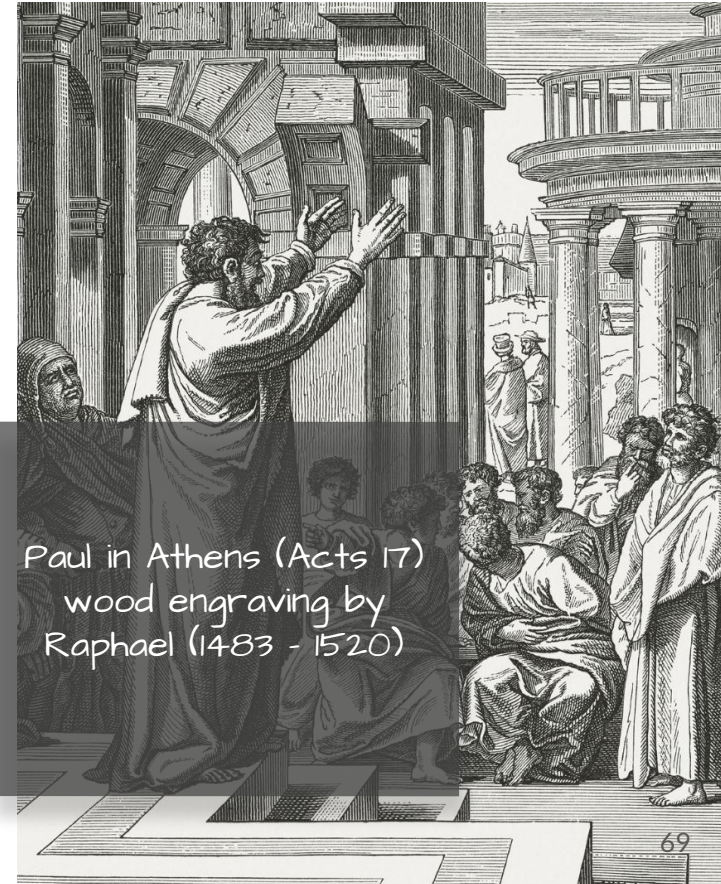
Pascal argues that the Christian faith offers the avenue to fill this internal longing, this *God shaped vacuum* (the abyss within human nature) by the true good which is God Himself.

Mere Apologetics, Alister E. McGrath,
<https://books.apple.com/us/book/mere-apologetics/id479555290>

5 - A Homing Instinct (*groping or desire*) for God (*continued*)

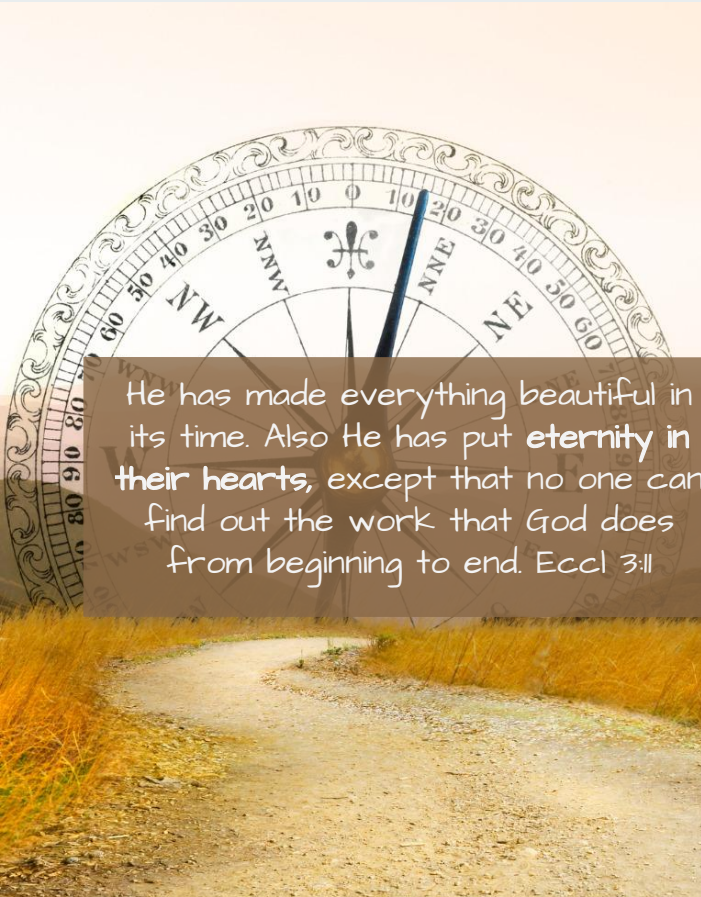
Then Paul stood in the midst of the [il]Areopagus and said, "Men of Athens, I perceive that in all things you are very religious; for as I was passing through and considering the objects of your worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: **TO THE UNKNOWN GOD**. Therefore, the One whom you worship without knowing, Him I proclaim to you: God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands. Nor is He worshiped with men's hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things. And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, **so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him**, though He is not far from each one of us; for in Him we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said, 'For we are also His offspring.' Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, something shaped by art and man's devising. Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead." Acts 17:22-31

Grope - ψηλαφήσειαν - to touch lightly, feel after in order to discover, to personally investigate. Comes from a root meaning, to rub, wipe; hence, to feel on the surface (see Gen 27:12,21,22 in the LXX).



Paul in Athens (Acts 17)
wood engraving by
Raphael (1483 - 1520)

5 - A Homing Instinct (*groping or desire*) for God *(continued)*



He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also He has put **eternity in their hearts**, except that no one can find out the work that God does from beginning to end. Eccl 3:11

This desire for God is one of the reasons why totalitarian regimes and oppressive philosophies cannot, and have not, been able to extinguish religion.

By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for **he waited for the city which has foundations**, whose builder and maker is God.
Hebrews 11:8-10

6 - The Splendor of the Natural World

The beauty of the world is a pointer toward the greater beauty of God. This is a leading theme of the great American theologian Jonathan Edwards. For Edwards, God desires His beauty to be known and enjoyed by His creatures and thus chooses to communicate that beauty through the created order.

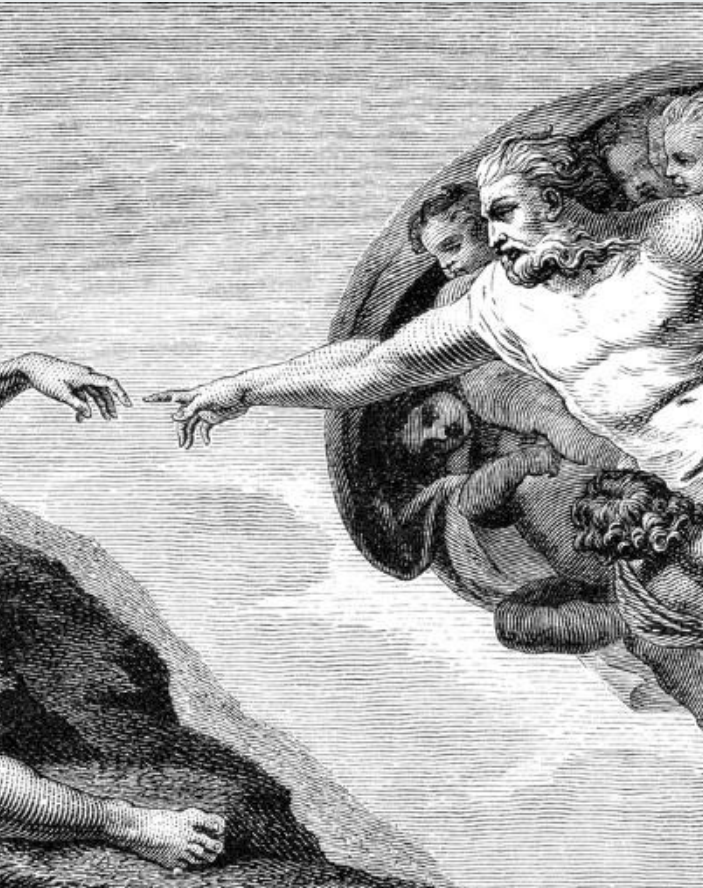
An apologetic, based on beauty is not initially about argument; it is about appreciation. We do not need to be convinced something is beautiful - we appreciate beauty immediately. This beauty of the natural world is "clue to the meaning of the universe" C. S. Lewis

"The human quest for beauty is thus really a quest for the **source** of that beauty, which is mediated through the things of this world, not contained within them."

Mere Apologetics, Alister E. McGrath,
<https://books.apple.com/us/book/mere-apologetics/id479555290>



7 - Relationship with God as a Person



All human beings have an inner desire for relationship. To be human is to exist in relationship.

When a person feels they are loved they can get on with their life and get through its troubles.

Christianity, through God's desire to relate to man and God taking the extra step in that desire by becoming a man, reveals that Christianity is fundamentally a relational faith.

God is not a *force*, but a *Person*. We are created in God's image and we are a person seeking relationship - therefore God is a person. "God is therefore One we *know*, not just *know about*."

Mere Apologetics, Alister E. McGrath,
<https://books.apple.com/us/book/mere-apologetics/id479555290>

8 - The Brevity of Life & Eternity

He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also **He has put eternity in their hearts**, except that no one can find out the work that God does from beginning to end. Eccl 3:11

As for man, his days are like grass; as a flower of the field, so he flourishes. For the wind passes over it, and it is gone, and its place remembers it no more. But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him, and His righteousness to children's children, Psalm 103:15-17

"My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle, and are spent without hope. Job 7:6

"The voice said, 'Cry out!' And he said, 'What shall I cry?' 'All flesh is grass, and all its loveliness is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades, because the breath of the Lord blows upon it; surely the people are grass. The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever.'" Isaiah 40:6



12 Steps for the Christian Apologist

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oZhYX762Kag&ab_channel=Legacy_Trainer

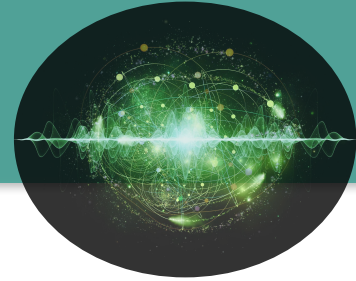
Norman Geisler's 12 Points that Prove Christianity is True - An Overview



1 - Truth about reality is knowable



2 - The opposite of true is false



3 - A theistic, creator, personal God exists

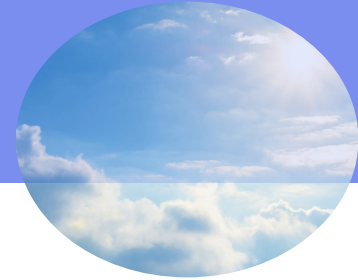
12 Steps for the Christian Apologist *(continued)*



**4 - Because of 3,
then miracles
are possible**



**5 - Miracles are
primarily used to
confirm the
message of God
to man**



**6 - The New
Testament is the
most reliable text of
antiquity and can be
trusted**

12 Steps for the Christian Apologist *(continued)*



7- The New Testament teaches that Jesus claimed to be God



8 - 7 is confirmed by:
A - Jesus' fulfillment of 189 Old Testament prophecies about Himself
b - Jesus lived a sinless and miraculous life
c - Jesus predicted and resurrected from the dead



9 - Therefore, due to 8, Jesus is Who He says He is, God.

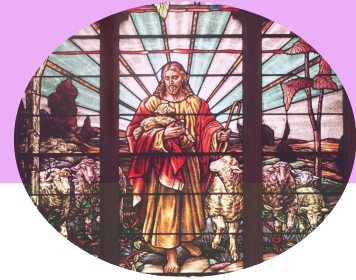
12 Steps for the Christian Apologist *(continued)*



10- Therefore, due to 9, everything Jesus teaches is true



11 - Jesus taught that the Bible is the Word of God



12 - Therefore, the Bible *is* the Word of God and anything opposed to it is false

There is no shortage of opposition to the Christian faith today - it is therefore critically important for believers to know what they believe and why they believe it so that we can meekly and courageously refute the dangerous worldviews influencing our society.

It is important to develop a discipleship of the mind in order to bolster our, and one another's, faith.

It is critically important for us to always be ready to give an answer for those who ask the reason for the hope that lies within us and to earnestly contend for our Christian faith.



What aspects of this class will you use as you become a more skilled apologist, a better *fisher of men*?

Which family member, friend or neighbor will you ask if you can review with them the lessons from this class?

What portions of this class warrant more study for you?

A woman with dark hair, wearing a white polka-dot shirt, is sitting at a desk with a laptop. She is holding her glasses to her chin and looking thoughtfully to the right. A blue banner with the text 'Now What?' is overlaid on the left side of the image.

Now What?