

Defending the Faith — Apologetics

1 Peter 3:15 *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,*

Noun: From the Greek word Apologia - a speech of defense, reply, the act of making a defense, defense

Philippians 1:16 ...I am put here for the **defense** of the gospel.

2 Corinthians 7:11 ...what eagerness **to clear [vindicate]** yourselves,

Acts 22:1 ..hear the **defense** that I now make before you."

Acts 25:16...had opportunity to make his **defense** concerning the charge laid against him.

1 Corinthians 9:3 This is my **defense** to those who would examine me.

Philippians 1:7...both in my imprisonment and in the **defense** and confirmation of the gospel.

2 Timothy 4:16 At my first **defense** no one came to stand by me,

Verb: From the Greek word Apologeomai - to speak in one's own defense against charges presumed to be false, to defend oneself

Luke 12:11 ...do not be anxious about how you should **defend** yourself

Luke 21:14 ...not to worry beforehand how you will **defend** yourselves.

Acts 19:33 ...wanted to make a **defense** to the crowd.

Acts 24:10 ...I cheerfully make my **defense**.

Acts 25:8 ..Paul argued in his **defense**

Acts 26:1 ...Then Paul stretched out his hand and made his **defense**:

Acts 26:2...I am going to make my **defense** today against all the accusations of the Jews

Acts 26:24 And as he was saying these things in his **defense**,

Romans 2:15 ...and their thoughts alternately accusing or else **defending** them,

2 Cor 12:19 Have you been thinking all along that we have been **defending** ourselves to you?

Defending Apologetics

Why some are opposed to the idea of apologetics:

1. God does not need us to defend him
2. Coercion is always lurking nearby
3. Defensiveness is never a good posture to speak from to others
4. Apologetics gets in the way of the Word of God
5. The distance between belief and unbelief can only be bridged by faith

Varieties of Apologetical Approaches:

Ontological Argument for God: (Rational or deductive arguments for God's existence)

St. Anselm (12th); René Descartes (17th); Alvin Plantinga (21st-modal version)
Anselm: God is which nothing greater can be conceived"

Cosmological Argument for God: (empirical /inductive arguments for God's existence)

Thomas Aquinas (13th); David Hume (18th); Norman Geisler (20th)
Aquinas: Five Ways— 1.unmoved mover, 2. first cause, 3. necessary being,
4. argument from degree, 5. the teleological argument.

Subjective Approach: (start from Man and work toward God)

Friedrich Schleiermacher (19th); Søren Kierkegaard(19th), Emil Brunner (20th)
A sense of Absolute dependence

Presuppositional Apologetics:

Cornelius Van Til (1895-1987)

"Now, in fact, I feel that the whole of history and civilization would be unintelligible to me if it were not for my belief in God. So true is this, that I propose to argue that unless God is back of everything, you cannot find meaning in anything." *Why I Believe in God*, p. 3

The book, "Five Views on Apologetics," edited by Steven B. Cowan:

The classical method — employs natural theology to establish theism as the correct worldview. uses many historical 'proofs.'

Proponents: William Craig, R.C. Sproul, Norman Geisler, Stephen Davis, R. Swinburne.

The evidential method — much in common with the classical method except in solving the issue concerning the value of miracles as evidence.

Proponents: Gary Habermas, John Montgomery, Clark Pinnock, Wolfhart Pannenberg

The cumulative case method — more like the brief that a lawyer makes or that a literary critic makes for a particular interpretation of a book. An informed argument that pieces together several types of data into a sort of hypothesis or theory

Proponents: Paul Feinburg, Basil Mitchell, likely includes C.S. Lewis, C. Evans.

The Presuppositional method — The apologist must simply presuppose the truth of Christianity as the proper starting point in apologetics.

Proponents: C. Van Til, Gordon Clark, Greg Bahsen, Francis Schaeffer, John Frame

The Reformed Epistemology Approach — holds that it is perfectly reasonable to believe many things without evidence. The focus will tend to be on negative or defensive apologetics.

Proponents: Steven Cowan; Kelly James Clark, Alvin Plantinga, Nicholas Wolterstorff, George Mavrodes, William Alson.