Worldview and Philosophical Apologetics

TEARING DOWN WALLS OF UNBELIEF

Image of Paul using apologetics in Athens

Instructor: Jeremy David Livermore, M.A., S.E., P.E.

Winter & Spring 2014
I. Class Information

a. Class Structure

i. Start time at 7:00. – try to be on time if possible.

ii. Finish time at 8:45.

iii. We will take a 10 minute break sometime around 7:50.

iv. Break for Easter 1 week.

v. The class will go to mid-April so about a semesters length. Typical classes go for 1 year here.

vi. If you miss a week, you can make it up, just ask me about that as this class is recorded for an online audience.

b. Class Requirements

i. No cost for the class

1. Suggested Donation for Hadavar Ministries, School of Biblical and Jewish Studies = $25 for your materials

2. Binder will be passed out after the break, they are stacked here

ii. No homework

iii. No tests

iv. No required reading (but strongly recommended)

v. All the books are beginner level except Scaling the Secular City
Introduction to Worldviews


vi. Recommend 1 chapter per week in these books. I will email this list out and you can click on the link to buy them on amazon or wherever.

vii. Brought some books from home for you to come check out.

viii. Only 1 Class requirement – SHOW UP EVERY WEEK!!

c. **Class content**

   i. It’s too hard to gage when we will get to each topic so I purposely did not create a syllabus with a schedule of topics.

   ii. Level of difficulty is broad and deep.

   iii. Hopefully, this class will be the beginning of a lifelong learning journey for you.

   d. **This class is the 3rd year of a 3 year series**

      i. Biblical & Historical Apologetics

      ii. Scientific Apologetics

      iii. Worldview & Philosophical Apologetics

      iv. Theological Apologetics
e. **Class Etiquette**

i. This class is geared for the Christian and non-Christian.

ii. If this is your first time in a church environment, we welcome you here and to our lives with open arms. We know that you welcome us in similar fashion as well.

iii. On that note, for all of us in here, Christian or not, our request is that we try to limit our questions in the class to 2 maximum. Maybe 3 max per class session if no one else is talking.

iv. Also, while we want a healthy conversation to emerge here, this is not a forum for debate or teaching your view on a particular topic. So the idea with this is that we want to work with the curriculum presented and not provide your own curriculum.

v. Lastly, (this one needs to be remembered) we want to stay on topic. There will be a billion temptations to ask questions off topic. Please try to wrestle that temptation down as we will most likely get to that topic in an upcoming class session.

f. **Instructor**

i. Jeremy David Livermore, S.E., P.E., M.A.

   1. jeremy@apologetics.com

ii. Jeremy received his Masters of Arts in Christian Apologetics from Biola University. Currently, he is a co-host of the Apologetics.com weekly a radio show on 99.5 fm KKLA. With Apologetics.com (non-profit based in OC), Jeremy writes articles and speaks publicly on apologetics locally and internationally. Jeremy’s ministry experience includes serving Jesus in Uganda, Liberia, Chile, Australia, Mexico, New Zealand, and Canada. He has several years of evangelistic & non-profit ministry experience working
with various organizations such as Campus Crusade, Engineering Ministries International, Engineers Without Borders, Habitat for Humanity, Euroteam Designs, & Apologetics.com.

II. **Motivation – Why start this journey together today?**

A. **To reverse the trends toward atheism in Western nations.**

1. **The population of the “religiously unaffiliated” is growing.**

   i. “In the last five years alone, the unaffiliated have increased to [about] 20% of all U.S. adults. Their ranks now include more than 13 million self-described atheists and agnostics (nearly 6% of the U.S. public), as well as nearly 33 million people who say they have no particular religious affiliation (14%).”
ii. “Those who ignore change – and the speed of it – become its victims.” - *The Great Evangelical Recession* by former journalist now pastor John Dickerson.¹

iii. Recent article in the OC Register: “He did some research and discovered that much of what he and other evangelicals assumed about their faith – that evangelicalism was politically powerful, culturally influential and on the rise – was either wrong or rapidly becoming untrue.”²

iv. 2 other recently published books covering the same topic were cited in this article: 
*The American Church in Crisis & A Call to Resurgence: Will Christianity Have a Funeral or a Future?*

v. David Kinnaman (from the Barna Group) research: *You Lost Me: Why Young Christians are Leaving Church and Rethinking Church*: Only 30% of young people

---

who grow up with a Christian background stay faithful to church and to faith throughout their transitions from the teen years through their twenties.

vi. So we need to reverse these trends towards atheism and agnosticism and loss of faith.

2. **We need to know the beliefs and belief trends of our culture to properly engage with people.**

   i. If we don’t know where culture is headed we won’t know how to accurately engage it.

   ii. We need to know what people are thinking and what people will be thinking to be effective.

   iii. We need to listen and understand where people are at and what they are dealing with.

B. **To not be taken captive by bad worldviews.**

1. **Ideas are powerful.**

   i. Ideas are everywhere and we encounter them daily.

      a. Everyone has a worldview.

      b. Every cultural expression communicates worldview ideas.

   ii. Ideas have CONSEQUENCES!

      a. Said John Stonestreet with the Colson Center for Christian Worldview³

      b. Ideas are powerful enough to shape cultures and change the course of history.

      c. What one person believes can affect how millions of others think.

   iii. What we believe MATTERS – at a personal level!

---

³ John Stonestreet, Stand to Reason, Rethink Conference 2013.
a. What I believe will inevitably influence how I live.

b. What ideas I embrace will change my life for the good or the worse.

2. **Ideas can take us captive.**

a. Because ideas impact in actual culture, those who advance the ideas have power over other minds.

b. Those who advance the ideas do so in a subtle manner…it’s almost imperceptible.

c. Stonestreet says there is “power in naming ideas.”

d. People often use “the same vocabulary but not the same dictionary.”

1) This is the tactic of cults, redefining terms.

2) This is the tactic of secular philosophers with an agenda.

e. Those who name the world, define the terms, and frame the picture win.

1) Defining helps with the framing the picture.

2) “He who frames the debate, wins the debate”? this is the truth.

f. The question is what idea and who is seeking to control us today? And what idea is already in control over our friends and neighbors?

3. **So, we must take ideas captive or they will take us captive – as John Stonestreet teaches.**

a. World-renown Philosopher Alvin Plantinga: “The contemporary Western intellectual world is a battleground or arena in which rages a battle for men’s

---

4 John Stonestreet, Stand to Reason, Rethink Conference 2013.
5 John Stonestreet, Stand to Reason, Rethink Conference 2013.
b. In a recent online article discussing “How the field of philosophy has experienced a Christian renaissance over the last half century.” Philosopher William Lane Craig notes: “Three schools of thought struggle against each other in the competition to win the minds of thinking men and women: Enlightenment naturalism, post-modern anti-realism, and theism, typically Christian theism. It is in the field of philosophy that the decisive battles are taking place, and the outcome of these contests will reverberate throughout the university and ultimately Western culture. In recent decades the battle lines have dramatically shifted…” towards taking the ground back in academia towards the rationality of the theistic worldview…

c. …but although Christian philosophers are moving and shaking in academia, the trends above (and other data) indicate we are losing the battle for the mind in non-academic settings and the public square.

d. If we don’t win the mind, we lose the person and ultimately the society.

1) For more on this I recommend reading J.P. Moreland’s *Love God With All Your Mind.*

C. **To properly care for others, we must stand up in the public square with grace and truth.**

   i. “The Public Square”

   ii. Throughout history, civilizations would naturally incorporate a public square in the center of the settlement.

   iii. Today “The Public Square” is a figure of speech that refers any setting or situation in

---


our modern world where ideas are exchanged and culture is shaped.

a. The new culture of the youth is one which Ravi Zacharias describes as “listens with their eyes and thinks with their feelings.”

b. Stonestreet adds “We define truth in what we feel.”

iv. We must do apologetics with real people with real worldviews in the public square.

v. Our voice is necessary and we need to vocalize or we will lose by default.

D. Scripture calls us to engage and tear down “deceptive philosophy” that is contrary to acquiring knowing God.

i. Theme of this class - is that which we are called to do: “Tear Down the Walls of Unbelief.”

ii. “We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God…” Paul, 2 Corinthians 10:5

iii. “…and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.” Paul, 2 Corinthians 10:5

iv. “I want you to know how hard I am contending for you...in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. I tell you this so that no one may deceive you by fine-sounding arguments...See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition...” Paul, Colossians 2

III. Goals

i. We want you to feel comfortable entering the public square and confident engaging others within it.

---

8 John Stonestreet, Stand to Reason, Rethink Conference 2013.
ii. So in this class we will provide you with the resources to recognize, identify, analyze, and evaluate Western Worldviews.

iii. As we go along here, we may even realize that we have done a poor job of identifying them in the past. If we don’t identify it properly, we won’t be successful in analyzing or evaluating it.

iv. We will be discussing popular sayings that we hear and the philosophy that produced them.

   a. Each of the popular sayings regurgitated on the street can be connected to their source which is Western academic philosophy.

   b. So we will examine philosophy at some depth – enough to give a philosophical background necessary to establish the worldview’s background, strength, etc.

v. We will define and describe worldviews that are out there that Christians encounter, may have already adopted, or will be unknowingly constrained with from society at large.

vi. Each class will involve a rigorous discussion so we can really analyze and evaluate each secular worldview appropriately.

vii. Our goal is to show that the Secular worldview has shortcomings and the Christian worldview is very successful. – More on this later.

IV. Structure of this Course

1. In each of the worldviews we will encounter in this course we will examine them - for the most the same way - in every class session as follows:

   a. Popular sayings we encounter
b. How should we understand these sayings?

1) Identify the worldview and philosophy behind it.

c. How did (Radical Skepticism) develop as a philosophy?

d. What are the key features of (Radical Skepticism)?

e. What are the implications of (Radical Skepticism)?

f. What are the criticisms of (Radical Skepticism)?

g. Does (Radical Skepticism) stand up to scrutiny?

h. What are sound Christian responses to these comments rooted in (Radical Skepticism)

2. **Defensive Apologetics – Responding to Worldviews**

   i. There are overlaps in these views. Meaning that some views have similar flavors of the others and similar components. Most people hold a few of these views.

   ii. Radical Skepticism

   iii. Secular Humanism

   iv. Naturalism, Materialism, Physicalism

   v. Empiricism, Scientism, Positivism

   vi. Logical Positivism & Verificationism

   vii. Linguistic Analysis – Philosophy of Language

   viii. Pragmatism

   ix. Subjectivism
x. Existentialism

xi. Postmodernism

xii. Relativism

xiii. Pluralism

xiv. The Problem of Evil

xv. Is Christianity Evil?

xvi. Setting ourselves up for success:

a. Typically if you go to a short seminar on apologetics or a few classes you will learn quick witty responses to use in big conversations. Then a week later either:

   1) Forget the witty responses.

   2) Get lost in the conversation because we never learned how to address the philosophical roots of their worldview produced comments.

b. For instance, you may learn something like the following:
xvii. This is very crude, but is a simple illustration of what often happens.

xviii. What we meet on the street is much more involved and nuanced than this.

xix. Typically Christians read this and walk away and then get blown away in the public square because we haven’t spent the time to comprehensively understand the view.

xx. People, the witty responses will come naturally when we really know what is

---

happening from root to fruit.

xxi. So, yes, this is just an example to help see what you will be capable of doing after this class.

xxii. But this is the only class I know of anywhere that will give the philosophical background for long-term healthy and effective engaging in the public square.

xxiii. We have the time and space to do it here.

3. **Offensive Philosophical Apologetics – Basic Case for Theism**

i. Taken together we get a rational, strong, and compelling case for the existence of God.

ii. Cosmological Argument

   a. Kalam Cosmological Argument Version

   b. Leibnizian Contingency Version

   c. Thomist Cosmological Argument Version

iii. Ontological Argument

iv. Teleological Argument

v. Axiological Argument

vi. Miracles Argument

vii. Desire Argument

viii. Reason Argument

ix. Aesthetic Argument

x. Religious Experience Argument
xi. Consciousness Argument

xii. This is an example of what kind of thing we will be doing in this class to build a rational case for the Christian worldview.

The Theistic God Exists

Premises

2. Traditional: universe, design, morality, being

5. Argument from reason

8. Argument from desire

11. Aesthetic beauty

14. Religious experience

17. Christianity supports theism

Objections

3. Objections

6. Atheism and pantheism can explain reason

9. Just because we desire something doesn’t mean it exists

12. Aesthetic beauty does not require God

15. Experience is subjective; others have experience

18. How? Isn’t this circular reasoning?

Rebuttals

4. Rebuttals

7. Traditional arguments make a cumulative case for God

10. The argument is a rational inference, not absolute

13. Then what is the standard for beauty?

16. Experience is part of a cumulative case

19. Not if there is reasonable evidence for Christianity

xiii. Guest speakers for this part.

V. Basics of Worldviews

A. What are worldviews?

i. Ways that we see the world.

ii. Glasses/Lenses

iii. Set of ideas that help us understand reality and relate to it.

iv. In *The Universe Next Door*, James Sire says, “a worldview is a commitment, a fundamental orientation of the heart, that can be expressed as a story or in a set of presuppositions (assumptions which may be true, partially true or entirely false) which we hold (consciously or subconsciously, consistently or inconsistently) about the basic constitution of reality, and that provides the foundation on which we live and move and have our being.”  

v. In the Foreword to *Making Sense of Your World*, Dr. Norman Geisler declares: “The truth is that a worldview is like colored glasses; it colors everything at which we look. It is a grid through which one views all of life. As such it helps form our thoughts, values, and decisions. The tragedy is that most people do not even know what their worldview is, how they got it, and how important it is in their lives.”

vi. John Stonestreet puts it this way “A Worldview is the framework of basic beliefs that we have (whether we know it or not) that shapes our view of and for the world.”

vii. C. Stephen Evans defines it as a “Comprehensive set of basic or ultimate beliefs that fit together in a consistent or coherent manner.”

---

12 John Stonestreet, Stand to Reason, Rethink Conference 2013.
B. These are some of the questions one could ask of a worldview:

i. Where did this view come from?

ii. How has it impacted our Western culture? (negatively or positively, big or small, economic or political or spiritual, etc.)

iii. Does it continue to impact?

iv. How is it typically expressed in Western culture?

v. Where would one encounter it?

vi. How can one identify it?

vii. Have groups of Christians adopted this worldview in any way?

viii. How does one know if he/she holds this worldview, even unknowingly?

C. Criteria of a Rational Worldview

1. Rational worldviews are those that satisfy the following criteria:

i. Non-Contradictory

ii. Coherent & Compatible

iii. Comprehensive approach to describe reality

iv. Adequately account for the features of reality

v. Supported and corroborated (validated/verified/etc.) by various types of evidence

vi. Describes origins of the universe and humanity

vii. Prescribes a value and meaning system which informs how to be and do in the actual world
viii. Predicts the future of humanity and the universe and the afterlife (if any)

ix. Answers the following questions:
   a. Why is there something rather than nothing?
   b. What is the nature of reality?
   c. How is human nature explained?
   d. What is good, evil, and suffering and what are their causes/meanings/etc.?
   e. How does one distinguish between what is right and wrong?
   f. How do we know what we know? & How is it possible to know anything?
   g. What is the meaning (if any) of all of history?

D. Criteria of the Best Worldview

   i. Meets all of the above criteria
   ii. Exceeds the others in each of the above criterion

VI. Argument and Thesis of this Course

1. Assumptions:
   i. Truth and reality are rationally intelligible (knowable).
   ii. One ought to accept as many truths as possible and reject as many falsehoods as possible.
   iii. One ought to accept what is rational and reject what is irrational.
   iv. When given various options, one ought to choose the best option.
v. The best option is the most true & most rational.

2. A Worldview that does not meet the criteria for the best worldview ought to be rejected.

3. The Secular Worldview does not meet the criteria for the best worldview.

4. Therefore, the Secular Worldview ought to be rejected.

5. The Monotheistic worldview does meet the criteria for the best worldview.

6. Therefore, the monotheistic worldview ought to be accepted.

7. Of the monotheistic worldviews, the Christian worldview (based on reasons, evidence, scripture, etc.) is the best.
1. **What is apologetics?**

   a. Not “apologizing”

   i. Apologetics comes from the Greek word “apologia” or “apologetikos” which can be translated as “From Reason” or “Suitable for Defense”

   1. Απο = From.

   2. Λογικος = Reasonable.

   ii. Apologetics is the systematic and logical defense of Christianity against its detractors and unbelievers backed up by evidence showing its credibility.

   iii. Apologetics seeks to show that Christianity is the most viable, compelling, and true way of living and experiencing reality.

      1. That is, it seeks to show that Christianity corresponds with reality better than any other worldview or set of beliefs.

      2. That the Christian worldview and religion is true.

   iv. Apologetics is the study that seeks to provide intellectual reasons for belief in the truth claims of the Christian faith.

   v. Apologetics asks the question, "Why and how do you believe what you believe?"

   vi. Apologetics helps to strengthen, confirm, and re-affirm the faith of believers. Most of us have times when we question and doubt what we believe. Apologetics gives us a foundation and reinforcement to our faith so our doubts aren’t toxic but helpful.

      1. In this regard, apologetics is helpful in giving a renewed boldness to the believer.
2. Our worship is enhanced, amplified, and supported.

vii. Apologetics responds to objections from those who are attempting move past obstacles to come to the faith.

1. Many non-Christians do not become Christians because of the intellectual obstacles.

viii. Apologetics disarms hostile unbelievers who attack Christianity.

1. A proper use of apologetics prevents the unbeliever from accusing Christianity of being intellectually foolish.

ix. Apologetics is “proof” and “persuasion.”

1. A combined approach. To win over ourselves and others to the truth by means of artful, articulate, and winsome persuasion of truth.

2. This persuasion is NOT selling a device we know is defective. That would be deceptive.

3. We persuasively argue for reality that others may not understand well.

4. We also allow them to see for themselves where their own inconsistencies occur.

x. Apologetics is not merely about winning an argument. This is just the means to the end of winning souls.

xi. Apologetics allows one to have direct access to Jesus by removing intellectual barriers, bringing down the walls we have installed so we can see Jesus face to face.

xii. Apologetics is a tool that the Holy Spirit can use to disarm an unbeliever. Ultimately, he is the one who moves men’s hearts towards repentance, but
he will not ask us to believe in the absurd or the false. He shows us the truth that will set us free.

b. Defense

i. Best offense is a good defense.

ii. In sports we must remember that it’s not just offense that is important but “Defense wins championships.”

iii. 1 Peter 3:15,

1. “But sanctify in your hearts Christ as Lord: being ready always to give answer to every man that asketh you a reason concerning the hope that is in you, yet with meekness and fear” (ASV)

2. “But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.” (NIV)

iv. There are several observations that we can make from this passage:

1. Christians are called to make a Defense.

   a. Throughout the ages, non-Christians have attempted to refute Christianity to end it and defeat the religion.

   b. We may not have been here as Christians if earlier attempts succeeded.

2. Notice the words in verse 15: “Always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you.”

3. The New Testament uses this term a number of times:
a. Acts 22:1. "Brethren and fathers, hear my defense which I now offer to you."

b. Philippians 1:16 “...I am appointed for the defense of the gospel.”

4. We are to be in a state of Readiness.

a. The time to go looking for answers to why you believe is not when you are challenged by a skeptic. You are to already be in a state of readiness.

b. You would not be very impressed if the fire alarm rang for an emergency and the fire fighters rushed to open a book entitled, "Essentials of Fire Fighting." They are expected to be ready to respond immediately. Why: so that lives can be saved.

c. In the same way, Christians are called to be ready to respond to anyone who asks us to give a reason for the hope that is within us.

d. This verse calls for EVERY Christian to be ready on EVERY occasion to give an answer to EVERY person who asks for the reason of our hope.

5. The Bible addresses, not only our ability to respond, but also the attitude with which we are to respond. Verse 15 says that we are to respond "with gentleness and reverence." We are not called to hit people over the heads with the truth or to be obnoxious in any way. Instead, we are to be lights that attract people to us. We are to be examples of the love of Christ and the patience of God, even when we are wronged.
a. We are to live the sort of lives that provide evidence of the power of the Gospel at work in us. Peter says to keep a good conscience so that in the thing in which you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame. (3:16).

b. No one should ever be able to point to our sinful behavior and say, "If that is what it means to be a Christian, then I want no part of it."

c. On the other hand, when we do sin, it becomes an opportunity for us to repent and to share with others the forgiveness that we have found at the cross. Being a Christian does not mean that you are perfect; rather it means that you are perfectly forgiven.

d. **We are simply beggars telling other beggars where we have found bread.**

e. **We are simply stumbling in the right direction.**

c. **Offense**

i. Apologetics is not only defensive in nature. Although Peter describes it here in terms of giving a defense of the faith, we ought to understand that apologetics also is offensive in nature – but not offensive (hurtful): it humbly upholds and gently persuades with caring passion as we fight for ourselves and the non-believer.

ii. 2 Corinthians 10:3-6, **“We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ…”**
iii. We are involved in a battle. You are on the front lines of the conflict. The weapons that are wielded are not of the flesh, but they are nevertheless real and powerful. They are weapons of truth and faith that can bring down cultural fortresses of intellectual false knowledge preventing people from knowing their God.

iv. Acts 17:22-31, “And Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus, and said, Ye men of Athens, in all things, I perceive that ye are very religious. For as I passed along, and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription, TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. What therefore ye worship in ignorance, this 

v. He goes onto show them with rational and compelling rhetoric that their understanding of this unknown God is faulty and that God is the creator of the world and gives the world life. So are we called to tear down false speculations of God. There are a lot of speculations about God and we are to be challenging them all to find the truth of God so we can know him correctly.

vi. In this sense, apologetics can be likened as follows: In the center of the field is a wonderful garden. The door to the garden is Jesus and the path to the door is the gospel. Apologetics involves pointing people to the path and removing all of the rocks, the thorns and the other obstacles along the way that prevent people from taking that path.

vii. The problem is that there are also false paths. They are the false religions, the cults and the other world views. Apologetics also involves informing people who are on those other paths that their’s is a dead-end. We want people to find the path (hear the gospel) by our apologetics so they can find door (Jesus) and enter the garden (kingdom of God).

viii. In order to be effective in showing people the path we must bring our “A” game. Mankind and the devil doesn’t want pervasive and persistant
humanistic philosophies destroyed. So we must be diligent and earnest to help others as Jude says:

1. Jude 1:3 Beloved, while I was giving all diligence to write unto you of our common salvation, I was constrained to write unto you exhorting you to **contend earnestly for the faith** which was once for all delivered unto the saints.

ix. We must “contend”: be on offense as well as defense.
a. Why study apologetics?

i. 1st Why do Christians often disregard apologetics?

1. They feel theologically ill-equipped or socially insecure.

2. They feel fear or have discomfort in debate or confrontation.

3. They confuse arguments against a belief with attacks on a person.

4. They want to always think about the positive benefits of Christianity and not the challenges to it.

5. They believe apologetics is ineffective in knowing God better and evangelism.

6. They wrongly assume apologetics believe reasoning can save someone.

7. They believe that faith and reason are not compatible.

8. They are dismayed by the attitude of some that use apologetics.

ii. Because our society, culture, nation, world, need clear and precise thinking that will help alleviate pressures of modern secularism, humanism, materialism, intellectualism, and anti-intellectualism pushing out Christianity.

1. JP Moreland’s book Love God with All Your Mind

iii. Because there are so many false teachings, cultural clichés, cults, & world religions that vie for people's spiritual attention.

iv. Because Christianity is being attacked from the outside and the inside.

v. Because cultural change comes from thought.

1. That is, IDEAS CHANGE CULTURE.

vi. Because it’s one of the ways the Christian experiences spiritual formation & transformation of the soul (Romans 12:1-2).
vii. Because it serves as a useful tool in both evangelism as well as in pre-evangelism.

1. It is through the use of apologetics that people are sometimes brought to the point where they are able to believe. **This is necessary because the heart cannot trust what the mind does not affirm.**

viii. Because young Christians are letting go from the faith in Western cultures. It’s needed now more than ever!

1. Our young people need us to show why we believe what we believe and relate it to reality so they can also embrace the faith with intellectual and rational honesty, rigor, and certainty.

2. David Kinnaman (from the Barna Group) research: You Lost Me: Why Young Christians are Leaving Church and Rethinking Church.

3. The national study of young adults focused on those who were regular church goers during their teen years and explored their reasons for disconnection from church life after age 15.

4. **Reason #1 – Churches seem overprotective.**
   
   a. A few of the defining characteristics of today's teens and young adults are their unprecedented access to ideas and worldviews as well as their prodigious consumption of popular culture. However, much of their experience of Christianity feels stifling, fear-based and risk-averse.

5. **Reason #2 – They wrestle with the exclusive nature of Christianity.**
   
   a. Younger Americans have been shaped by a culture that esteems open-mindedness, tolerance and acceptance.

   b. “churches are afraid of the beliefs of other faiths” (29%)

   c. “church is like a country club, only for insiders” (22%).
6. **Reason #3 – The church feels unfriendly to those who doubt.**
   
a. Young adults with Christian experience say the church is not a place that allows them to express doubts. They do not feel safe admitting that sometimes Christianity does not make sense. In addition, many feel that the church’s response to doubt is trivial.

   b. “to ask my most pressing life questions in church” (36%)

   c. “significant intellectual doubts about my faith” (23%).

7. **Reason #4 – Churches come across as antagonistic to science.**
   
a. Disconnected from church or from faith is the tension they feel between Christianity and science.

   b. “Christians are too confident they know all the answers” (35%).

   c. “churches are out of step with the scientific world we live in” (29%).

   d. “Christianity is anti-science” (25%).

8. **Reason #5 – Related to sexuality, young Christians experience church as simplistic or judgmental.**

9. **Reason #6 – Teens’ and twenty somethings’ experience of Christianity is shallow** (Something is lacking in their experience of church).

10. **Other interesting items to note:**
   
a. Only 30% of young people who grow up with a Christian background stay faithful to church and to faith throughout their transitions from the teen years through their twenties.

   b. Today's teens and young adults are spiritually the most eclectic generation the nation has seen. They are also much less likely than
prior generations to begin their religious explorations with Christianity. Moreover, their pervasive technology use is deepening the generation gap, allowing them to embrace new ways of learning about and connecting to the world.

c. Kinnaman commented on this myth: "The significant spiritual and technological changes over the last 50 years makes the dropout problem more urgent. Young people are dropping out earlier, staying away longer, and if they come back are less likely to see the church as a long-term part of their life. Today's young adults who drop out of faith are continuing something the Boomers began as a generation of spiritual free agents. Yet, today's dropout phenomenon is a more intractable, complex problem."

d. Reality: College certainly plays a role in young Christians' spiritual journeys, but it is not necessarily the 'faith killer' many assume. College experiences, particularly in public universities, can be neutral or even adversarial to faith. However, it is too simplistic to blame college for today's young church dropouts. Many are emotionally disconnected from church before their 16th birthday. Both college (various philosophies espoused on campus) and teen years (poor youth groups, etc.) play a significant role.

e. "The problem arises from the inadequacy of preparing young Christians for life beyond youth group." Kinnaman pointed to research findings showing that "only a small minority of young Christians has been taught to think about matters of faith, calling, and culture. Fewer than 1 out of 5 have any idea how the Bible ought to inform their scholastic and professional interests. And most lack adult mentors or meaningful friendships with older Christians who can guide them through the inevitable questions that arise during the course of their studies. In other words, the university setting does not usually cause
the disconnect; it exposes the shallow-faith problem of many young disciples." ➔ Youth have shallow meaning and are non-resourced.

ix. Because our examples in the Bible used reason and evidences

1. Here we see that miracles are given so people would believe in Jesus or God: 1 Kings 18:20-40, Mark 16:20, Acts 1:3, Acts 2:22, Hebrews 2:3-4.

2. Here God uses reason to argue His case: Isaiah 1:18 Come now, and let us reason together, saith Jehovah: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

3. Here Jesus uses reason: Matthew 22

4. Here it is shown that without evidence it is unreasonable to believe: Luke 24:39 See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye behold me having.

5. Here Peter and John protest their right to defend the gospel: Acts 4:19 As for us, we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard.

6. Here Paul points to a fruitful creation giving evidence for God and his blessings and speaks against false religions: Acts 14:15-17

7. Here Paul uses reason to witness to the Greeks: Acts 17

8. Here Apollos uses reason to witness to the Jews: Acts 18:27 For he vigorously refuted his Jewish opponents in public debate, proving from the Scriptures that Jesus was the Messiah.

9. Here Paul even defended the gospel to Governors: Acts 24

10. Here God gave mankind evidence of his existence and character through creation: Romans 1:19-21 since what may be known about God is plain to them,
because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse. For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him...

11. Here Paul’s mission included defending the gospel: Phil 1:7 whether I am in chains or defending and confirming the gospel, all of you share in God’s grace with me.

x. Because the first Christians & later Christians continued to use apologetics.

1. Early Christians and church Fathers like Origen, Iranaeus, Ignatius, Justin Martyr, Athenagoras, Theophilus, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Aristides, Tatian, Athanasius, Augustine, etc.

2. These men wrote hundreds of letters, books, etc. defending the faith even to Roman emperors.

3. Middle Age Philosophers & Theologians: Anselm, Aquinas, etc.

4. Reformers: Huss, Wycliffe, Luther, Calvin, Melanchthon, Wesley, etc.

xi. Because we are all called to

1. It’s a biblical calling we all have.

2. We need to continue in our strong Christian heritage that has been passed on through the generations since the Apostles.

3. Pastors need to study apologetics too.
4. Mat 28:19-20 *Therefore go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, (20) teaching them to observe all things, whatever I commanded you. And, behold, I am with you all the days until the end of the world. Amen.*

5. Here Christians are called to eliminate doubts in the minds of the skeptic and pull down walls preventing unbelief: 2 Co 10:4-5 *For the weapons of our warfare are not fleshly, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, (5) pulling down imaginations and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought into the obedience of Christ;*

6. 1 Ti 6:12 *Fight the good fight of faith. Lay hold on eternal life, to which you are also called and have professed a good profession before many witnesses.*

7. 2 Ti 2:15 *Study earnestly to present yourself approved to God, a workman that does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth.*

8. 2 Ti 2:25 *in meekness instructing those who oppose, if perhaps God will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth,*

9. 2 Ti 3:16 *All Scripture is God-breathed, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,*

10. 2 Ti 4:2 *preach the Word, be instant in season and out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine.*

11. Here false doctrines and ideas should be addressed: Titus 1:9-11 *He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.*

12. Phi 1:7 *even as it is righteous for me to think this of you all, because you have me in your heart, inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you are all partakers of my grace.*
13. Phi 1:17 But these others preach in love, knowing that I am set for the defense of the gospel.

14. 1 Pe 3:15 but sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and be ready always to give an answer to everyone who asks you a reason of the hope in you, with meekness and fear;

15. Col 4:6 Let your speech be always with grace, having been seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one.
a. **How does one study and use Apologetics?**

i. **Recognize that all of us can easily become prideful.**

1. “Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up.” (1 Corinthians 8:1) & “God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble and oppressed.” (James 4:6 - NIV)

2. We must remember that God exalts the humble and humbles the exalted.

3. Let’s not be that person that people are repelled by and the reason that people steer clear from the uptight, know-it-all Christian.

4. On the contrary, we are called to be attractive people that yield the fruits of the spirit. People should enjoy being around us not lectured or condemned.

ii. **Be a “Lifelong Learner”**

1. Apologetics is a broad field of study and no one can be an expert in each branch.

2. Be prepared to study apologetics the rest of your life.

3. Be humble and know that we don’t know it all and will never come close.

4. Do while learning.

5. Do not wait till you reached the end of the information because you won’t. There is an ocean of information out there but do while learning.

iii. **Develop the inner life of the soul and mind for character formation**

1. Emphasizing the important things in life: Keeping first things first, and second things second.
2. Becoming like Christ and serving him are both essential to the Christian life.

3. Who we become is just as important as what we do.

4. Both ought to be emphasized. We cannot just learn and do apologetics without developing the inner self through DAILY devotions and spiritual disciplines.

5. We must continually desire sanctification (becoming like Christ) and know that we are not whole till we reach heaven.

6. Our brokenness and dependence on Jesus is to be a DAILY reminder for the Christian and Christian apologist.

iv. Recognize that we all need encouragement and help.

1. Everyone (including ourselves) deals with spiritual (and often emotional) brokenness.

2. We must love them and respect them and what they are going through as people - even if they have a destructive worldview or walls preventing belief.

3. Love them where they are at.

4. Care for their soul while treating the issues in their mind.

5. We will only do this well when we have an utter dependence on Jesus for our own healthiness and growth.

6. Who we are will shine in the public square. Our character will come out whether we like it or not. People hear our “tone” more than we do.

7. When they hear us, let them hear the tone of grace and truth.

   a. Confronting the unbelief issues with truth and loving the person with grace.
b. We need to understand and appropriate Grace & Truth in our discussions.

c. John 1:17, “For the law was given to Moses, grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.”

d. Jesus brought with generosity the GRACE of God to the Jewish law.

e. But upheld with power the TRUTH of God throughout his ministry despite mankind’s personal struggles.

v. Find evidence or reason that can be used to argue a compelling (inductive) case for some aspect of apologetics so as to provide clear direction to truth.

1. So for any public square, we need to be ready to be ambassadors and give an answer (1 Peter 3:15) that they need. If we don’t know, we need to tell them and come back to them later after we researched it.

2. It is best to know the basics in all branches of apologetics and perhaps specialize in a branch later on.

3. Apologetics is “proof” and “persuasion.”

   i. A combined approach. To win over ourselves and others to the truth by means of artful, articulate, and winsome persuasion of truth.

   ii. We persuasively argue towards reality that others may not understand well.

   iii. We also allow them to see for themselves where their own inconsistencies occur.

4. Apologetics is not merely about winning an argument. Arguments (rational arguments) are just means to the end of winning souls.
5. Apologetics allows one to have direct access to Jesus by removing intellectual barriers, bringing down the walls we have installed so we can see Jesus face to face.

6. Know the difference between inductive and deductive arguments.

   iv. Inductive: building a case based on indirect and direct evidence to conclude the cause from the effects or conclude the general rule from the particular data.

   1. Figuring out where the evidence point us to?
   2. Figuring out what I infer from the evidence?
   3. Figuring out what is the most plausible conclusion with the best explanatory power and scope.
   4. One can increase certainty based on the evidence.
   5. This is what we do with historical, philosophical, scientific arguments.

   v. Deductive: true premises constructed to show the most logical conclusion; if the logic is valid and the premises are true then the argument is sound and one can be 100% certain.

   1. We use this mostly in philosophical arguments but can be used elsewhere.
vi. Know the “Burden of Persuasion”

1. This is the level of proof required for one to justify his claim.
   a. If I make a claim, what level of certainty do I need to prove to in order to be justified?
   b. What is the level of proof required to justify a historical claim?
      1. (Jesus rose from the grave, the Bible reports facts of history, and people were miraculously healed)
   c. The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that the due process clause of the Fifth Amendment and Fourteenth Amendments to the federal constitution prohibit criminal defendants from being convicted on any (level) of evidence less than proof beyond a reasonable doubt.¹
   d. Convicting as guilty is very weighty (putting someone behind bars), so its level is high – this is true for criminal law.
   e. In a criminal law case, the burden of persuasion is fixed on the prosecution (government) side.
   f. It does not change during the entire trial, the burden of persuasion is proving the guilt of the defendant by the prosecution.
   g. The level of persuasion they must get to is “Beyond Reasonable Doubt” (the evidence must be so conclusive and complete that all reasonable doubts are removed).
   h. Casey Anthony trial of 2010 – found “not guilty” because the jury still had reasonable doubts.

2. This certainty list shows the level of certainty the jury or judge will have based on the argument presented.

3. The various levels of certainty for criminal law are:
   
a. 0%-10% = Complete skepticism
      i. Absolutely unable to believe
   
b. 10%-25% = Reasonable suspicion
      i. Cops can frisk you
   
c. 25%-50.0% = Probable cause
      i. Warrant out for my arrest
   
d. 50.1%-75% = Preponderance of the Evidence
      i. Civil Cases = “more probable than not” or majority
   
e. 75%-90% = Clear and Convincing Evidence
      i. Special Legal Circumstances – highly probability
   
f. 90%-99.9% = Beyond a Reasonable Doubt
      i. Criminal Law Standard
   
g. 100.0% - Beyond all doubt absolute
      i. Absolutely cannot deny, 100% certainty

4. In a civil law case, the prosecution and defense has a burden of persuasion, where they both must prove their thesis by the standard of the “Preponderance of the Evidence”: more probable than not.
5. If “Beyond Reasonable Doubt” is the required level for showing the existence of God and one’s need for a savior, this puts me in a position to argue for a lot of facts to a high level of persuasion. This would be a big undertaking - but doable with time.

6. But history is different than criminal law and more like civil law where the standard of certainty and the standards of knowledge required are at the 50.1% (more probable than not) level.
   a. Did Homer’s *Iliad* report a real Trojan war or was he reporting fiction?
   b. We have enough historical and archeological evidence to show that it is “more probable than not” that he did report an actual war.
   c. So we can have adequate certainty to say this actually happened because for historians this is all you need.

7. So for historical claims of the Christian faith (Jesus rose from the grave, the Bible reports facts of history, and people were miraculously healed) all we need to do is show enough evidence (literature, archeology, etc.) to persuade to the “more probable than not” level instead of the “beyond reasonable doubt” level because “more probable than not” is the standard of history.

8. The great news for us is that the historical evidence is compelling and our certainty can easily reach the 90% level, even though all we need to reach is the 50.1% level.

9. Apologetics: mastering making a case by putting the pieces of the puzzle together. How evidence is assembled makes a powerful case. Possible is not enough but “more probable than not” is.
vii. **Know the “Burden of Proof”**

1. **“Burden of Proof”:** A duty placed upon a civil or criminal defendant to prove or disprove a disputed fact.\(^2\)

2. The burden of proof is the responsibility someone has to defend or give evidence for his or her view. The burden of proof has one cardinal rule: Whoever makes the claim bears the burden. Don’t allow yourself to be thrust into a defensive position when the other person is making the claim. – Greg Koukl, Christian Apologist.

   i. Someone in the public square (any setting) says: “I believe that abortion is wrong but I am not willing to impose my belief on other people.”

   ii. This is an assertion.

iii. Difference between assertions and arguments.

   1. Arguments are true premises that lead to a logical conclusion.

   2. Assertions are propositions regarding a belief or a state of affairs.

   iv. The abortion statement is not an argument. There is no argument presented for us to refute.

3. Greg Koukl’s book *Tactics*, presents great techniques and tools to use in debate, argument, and just casual conversation. We will cover his book in this section. Tactics includes using the Socratic method: asking questions.

4. Questions get you into the driver’s seat and you can control a conversation.

5. Questions are diplomatic and non-combative.

6. Questions are neutral - your views aren’t even revealed.

7. Questions are conversation starters.

8. Tactics are to be used to show a person their bad thinking not belittle them.

9. Tactics give you a game plan and helps you maneuver better in a conversation to maintain control.

a. **Columbo Tactic #1: What do you mean by that?**

   i. Gather information about the persons view in a friendly cordial manner without having to defend your view at all.

   ii. Have them spell exactly what they are saying.

   iii. This first Tactic:

       1. Engages them.

       2. Flatters them.

       3. Forces them to think more carefully or precisely about what they mean.

       4. Helps you know what their position is. Listen to the information until you get absolute clarity.

   iv. Use this question all day long and there is no pressure on you.

   v. “All religions are basically the same.”

       1. What do you mean by that? How are they the same?

   vi. “You shouldn’t force your views on me.”

---

3 *Tactics* by Greg Koukl
1. What do you mean by that? Are you forcing your view on me?

vii. “Everyone interprets the Bible differently and everyone’s is valid.”

1. What do you mean by that? Am I right and are you also right?

viii. “There is no way that God can exists when there is so much evil in the world.”

1. What do you mean by that? What do you mean by evil? Where does it come from?

ix. “You’re intolerant.”

1. What do you mean by that?

b. **Columbo Tactic #2: How did you get to that conclusion?**

   i. Why do you say that?

   ii. What are your reasons for holding that view?

   iii. Why should I believe what you believe?

   iv. What makes you think that’s the right way to see it? I’m curious.

   v. Why would you say a thing like that?

   vi. How did you get to the conclusion that I should trust that your organization the Mormon Church, Joseph Smith, the Watchtower speaks for God? How do you know?

   vii. The person that makes the claim bears the burden of proof.
viii. Reverses the burden of proof to encourage the other person to give reasons for her own view. Shifting the burden of proof on them.

ix. Jesus went to India and reincarnation came from the Bible.

1. How did you get to that conclusion.

x. You can never know anything for sure.

1. How did you get to that conclusion.

xi. Morals are just invented by culture.

1. How did you get to that conclusion.

xii. Christians wrote the Bible, so it’s bias.

1. How did you get to that conclusion.

xiii. An alternative explanation is not a refutation – that is, a story about how things go does not supply evidence or good reasons. “Jesus didn’t rise from the grave, he merely awoke from the coma he was in.”

xiv. So we must ask 3 additional questions:

1. Is it possible? Can such a thing occur?

2. Is it plausible? Is it reasonable to think something like this might have taken place?

3. Is it probable? Is it the best explanation, considering competing options? Why is their explanation better than mine?

4. Where are the evidence and reasons?

5. What about refuting my explanation before presenting yours?
xv. The two most important questions you can ever ask are, “What do you believe?” and “Why do you believe it?”

xvi. Some people say that they don’t have reasons for their view but they hold it anyway. You can say “How did you get to that conclusion?”

1. This will tempt them to give reasons for the view “I don’t need reasons.”

2. But don’t press them if they don’t want to go.

3. We don’t have to bring up Jesus if we think the conversation is going to die.

4. Sow a few seeds for others to harvest.

5. Put a stone in their shoe.

xvii. The burden of proof lies on the one making the claim.

xviii. Don’t take on a professor or someone in a power position in large debate because a frontal attack on a superior force will never win; the man with the microphone wins. Keep the burden of proof on the professor or the larger frontal force making the claim.

xix. It’s his duty to prove himself right and justified.

xx. If someone is trying to overpower or just throw out tons of mixed assertions; use #1 & #2 & say “Let me think about it” and then come back after doing the research.

c. **Columbo Tactic #3: Leading the Way**

   i. This takes us on offense.
ii. Use these questions to expose a weakness or flaw.

   1. Find the fallacy, misstep, non-sequitur, etc.

iii. Use these questions to take the conversation where you want it to go.

   1. This tactic takes insight and listening to the answers in #1 & #2.

   2. If you lack the knowledge or they aren’t interested let the conversation die a natural death.

iv. Can you consider….?

v. Have you considered….?

vi. Can you clear this up for me?...

vii. Can you help me understand this?....

viii. Or even use a transitional statement: Let me suggest an alternative and tell me if you think it’s an improvement. If not, tell me why.

ix. Or: I wouldn’t characterize it that way. Here’s what I think would be a more accurate representation.

x. Or: I don’t think I agree with the way you put it. Think about this…

xi. Some may ask us leading questions to label us as ignorant, intolerant, fundamentalist, etc.

   1. But we can side-step these questions and offer our own.

   2. Or answer it differently than yes or no.

xii. Use the passive aggressive tolerance trick.

   1. We know everyone thinks their views are the correct one.
2. When we are labeled intolerant we can simply ask them what they mean by that (#1) or ask them if they consider themselves to be tolerant & if they are judging me for holding that view. Another thing to do is ask them if they are confusing the definition of intolerance with un-acceptance. Another thing is to ask them that “even if I was intolerant, what does that have to do with the issue of concern?”

d. Perfecting Columbo:

i. Defending against Columbo:

1. If someone is using #1 & #2 on us, we just answer for our beliefs and give an appropriate representation of the facts.

2. If someone proceeds with a leading question #3, we can side step it and make them answer for themselves.

3. Don’t follow the bait - it’s a trap.

4. Stay in complete control of your side of the conversation. Say, “My sense is that you are using questions to explain your own point. Can you express your view so that I don’t have to do it for you? And then I will go off and just give it some thought.”

5. This is similar to #2 and puts the burden of proof back on them.

ii. When a question is loaded or is a challenge:

1. What gives you the right….?

2. Who are you to say…?

3. Who’s to say…?
4. Don’t follow the bait - it’s a trap.

5. “What gives you the right….?” ➔ really means:
   a. “No one is justified saying…”

6. “Who are you to say…?” ➔ really means:
   a. “One answer is just as good as another.”
   b. Or “No one can ever know the truth about…”

7. “Who’s to say…?” ➔ really means:
   a. “You are wrong for saying someone else is wrong.” =
      but this is a self-contradictory statement.

8. If they turn it into a statement, their objection loses its luster.

e. Taking the Roof Off

i. Strategy in argumentation. Jesus even used this type of reasoning. It has been around for a while. Scholars refer to this as *Reductio ad Absurdum* in Latin.

ii. Take the roof off of the house of the argument, look inside the house and expose the real content of the argument.

iii. This approach takes the argument to its logical conclusion.

iv. If the logical conclusion of the argument is followed, absurdity would result.
f. **Suicidal Statements or Self-Defeating Statements**

   i. Every statement we say is about something.

   ii. Sometimes statements are actually about themselves.

   iii. Suicidal statements fail to satisfy their own standard or criteria of validity.

   iv. They cannot take their own advice.

   v. It is suicidal if reasons used against your view also defeat the reasons themselves.

   vi. Suicidal statements commit suicide because they are attempting to deny the law of non-contradiction: A statement cannot be both true and false at the same time and in the same sense. (“X” cannot both be “X” and “non-X” at the same time and in the same sense.)

   vii. “There is no truth.”

       If there is no truth this statement itself cannot be true. Therefore, truth exists. You cannot deny truth without affirming it. You might respond, "Is that true?" or "How can it be true that there is no truth?"

   viii. “You can't know truth.”

       If you can't know truth then you would never know that "you can't know truth." This person is claiming to know the truth that we can't know truth. You might respond, "Then how do you know that?"

---