

INTRODUCTION TO APOLOGETICS

How to Defend and Contend for Your Faith



Goals

By the end of this seminar, you should be able to:

**Introduce me.
And explain why
you're using
boxing imagery !!**



- **Understand What Apologetics Is** – Define apologetics and explain its biblical foundation, clarifying what it means to “defend” and “contend” for the faith (1 Peter 3:15; Jude 3).
- **Recognize Who Needs Apologetics** – Identify the people in our lives—friends, family, coworkers, skeptics—who may raise questions or objections and understand the importance of engaging them with both grace and truth.
- **Grasp Why Apologetics Matters** – Explore why defending the faith is vital for spiritual growth, evangelism, and strengthening the church in today’s culture of doubt and relativism.
- **Learn When & How to Engage Effectively** – Develop practical skills for responding to questions and objections with clarity and confidence, while maintaining a Christlike attitude in conversations.





Where and What?

Goal #1: Understand What Apologetics Is

Define apologetics and explain its biblical foundation, clarifying what it means to “defend” and “contend” for the faith (1 Peter 3:15; Jude 3).

Where is this foundational concept and terminology for *apologetics* found in the Bible?

What does it mean/not mean?

Scripture 1

Don't forget to explain why it's not a good idea to read just one verse. Context is king!



1 Peter 3:13-17

13 Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good?

14 But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled,

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,

16 having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame.

17 For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God's will, than for doing evil.



Scripture 2

Jude 1-4

1 Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James,
To those who are called, beloved in God the Father and kept for
Jesus Christ:

2 May mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you.

3 Beloved, although I was very eager to write to you about
our common salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to
you to **contend** for the faith that was once for all delivered to the
saints.

4 For certain people have crept in unnoticed who long ago
were designated for this condemnation, ungodly people, who
pervert the grace of our God into sensuality and deny our only
Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.



Considering Co

Don't forget to explain why there are two different approaches here.



1 Peter 3:13-17

Defense

13 Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good?

14 But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled,

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,

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4 For certain people have crept in unnoticed who long ago were designated for this condemnation, ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into sensuality and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

Where does the word “apologetics” come from?

1 Peter 3:15

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,

15	but	in	your	hearts	honor	Christ	the	Lord	as	holy	,	always	being	
	δέ	έν	σύ	ό	καρδία	Χριστός	ό	κύριος	ἀγιάζω	ἀεί				
	de	en	sy	ho	kardia	Christos	ho	kyrios	hagiazō	aei				
	1161	1722	5216	3588	2588	5547	3588	2962	37	104				
	prepared	to	make	a	defense	to	anyone	who	asks	you	for	a	reason	for
	ἔτοιμος	πρός			ἀπολογία	πᾶς		ὁ	αἰτέω	σύ		λόγος	περί	
	petoimpos	pros			apologia	pas		ho	aiteō	sy		logos	peri	
	2092	4314			627	3956		3588	154	5209		3056	4012	
	the	hope	that	is	in	you;	yet	do	it	with	gentleness	and	respect,	
	ὁ	ἐλπίς		έν	σύ	ἀλλά	μετά	πραῦτης	καί	φόβος				
	ho	elpis		en	sy	alla	meta	prautēs	kai	phobos				
	2398	1680		1722	5213	235	3326	4240	2532	5401				

make a defense
ἀπολογία
apologia
627

627. ἀπολογία *apología*; *gen. apologías*, fem. noun from *apologéomai* (626), to give an answer or speech in defense of oneself. A plea, defense before a tribunal or elsewhere (Acts 22:1; 2 Tim. 4:16). Generally (2 Cor. 7:11; Phil. 1:7, 17). Followed by dat. of person, against whom (1 Cor. 9:3; 1 Pet. 3:15); by *perí* (4012), concerning, and the gen. (Acts 25:16); with *prós* (4314), toward, and the acc. (Acts 22:1).

Syn.: *apókrisis* (612), the act of answering; *apókrima* (610), an answer, sentence; *eperótēma* (1906), an answer in the form of an interrogation.

Ant.: *sigé* (4602), silence; *hēsuchia* (2271), quietness.




Where else is this defense (apologia) word used?

Ac 22:1 “Brothers and fathers, hear the defense that I now make before you.”

Ac 25:16 I answered them that it was not the custom of the Romans to give up anyone before the accused met the accusers face to face and had opportunity to make his defense concerning the charge laid against him.

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

Php 1:7 It is right for me to feel this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart, for you are all partakers with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel.

Php 1:16 The latter do it out of love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel. 

2 Ti 4:16 At my first defense no one came to stand by me, but all deserted me. May it not be charged against them!

1 Pe 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,

****appears a total of 17x in noun and verb forms in the New Testament**

What about the word “contend”?

Jude 3

3 Beloved, although I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints.

3 Beloved, although I was very eager to write to you about our common
ἀγαπητός πᾶς σπουδή ποιέω γράφω σύ περί ἐγώ κοινός
agapētos pas spoudē poieō graphō sy peri egō koinos
27 3956 4710 4160 1125 5213 4012 2257 2839

salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for
ὁ σωτηρία ἔχω ἀνάγκη γράφω παρακαλέω σύ
ho sōtēria echō anakhē graphō parakaleō sy
3588 4001 2192 318 1125 3870 5213 1864

the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints
ὁ πίστις
ho pistis
3588 4102

contend
ἐπαγωνίζομαι
epagōnizomai
1864

Ask the audience why they think this word is only used once in the NT? Now discuss...



contend for
ἐπαγωνίζομαι
epagōnizomai
1864

1864. ἐπαγωνίζομαι *epagōnizomai*; fut *epagōnísomai*, from *epí* (1909), for, and *agōnízomai* (75), to strive, contend earnestly. To fight for or in reference to something, with the dat. of that which gives the occasion (Jude 1:3).

Syn.: *máchomai* (3164), to fight; *diamáchomai* (1264), to struggle against; *erízō* (2051), to strive; *athléō* (118), to contend in games; *poleméō* (4170), to fight in war.

Ant.: *eirēneúō* (1514), to keep peace or be at peace, reconcile; *eirēnopoieō* (1517), to make peace; *anéchomai* (430), to tolerate; *hēsucházō* (2270), to be quiet.



So, what is the definition of apologetics?

Terms and concepts taken from the words *defend* and *contend* are:

- answer, speech, defense, vindication (proof), persuasion, refutation, or a plea in an interrogation
- striving, struggling, wrestling, or fighting in games/war

Definition:

A _____ for your (Christian) faith.

So, after all that, you're going to make them create their own definition??



The background of the slide features a grayscale silhouette of four men in a boxing ring. One man in the center is in a boxing stance, throwing a right-hand jab towards another man who is also in a boxing stance. A third man stands to the left, and a fourth man stands to the right, both appearing to be observing the fight. The ring is enclosed by ropes.

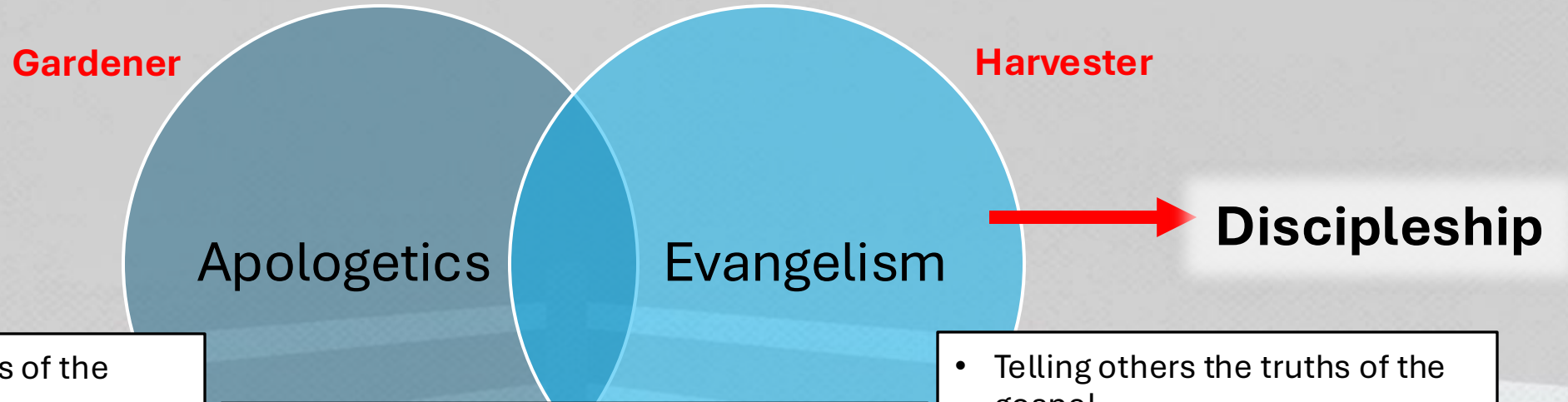
Who?

Goal #2: Recognize Who Needs Apologetics

Identify the people in our lives—friends, family, coworkers, skeptics—who may raise questions or objections and understand the importance of engaging them with both grace and truth.

- My apologetics journey
- Apologetics sounds very similar to evangelism; is there a difference?

What is the Relationship Between Apologetics and Evangelism?



- Defending the truths of the Christian faith.
- Addresses everything from the existence of God to the reliability of the Old and New Testaments.
- Usually requires some level of intellectual sophistication; can involve questioning, logical arguments, historical debates, philosophical discussions, interpretive disputes, and more.

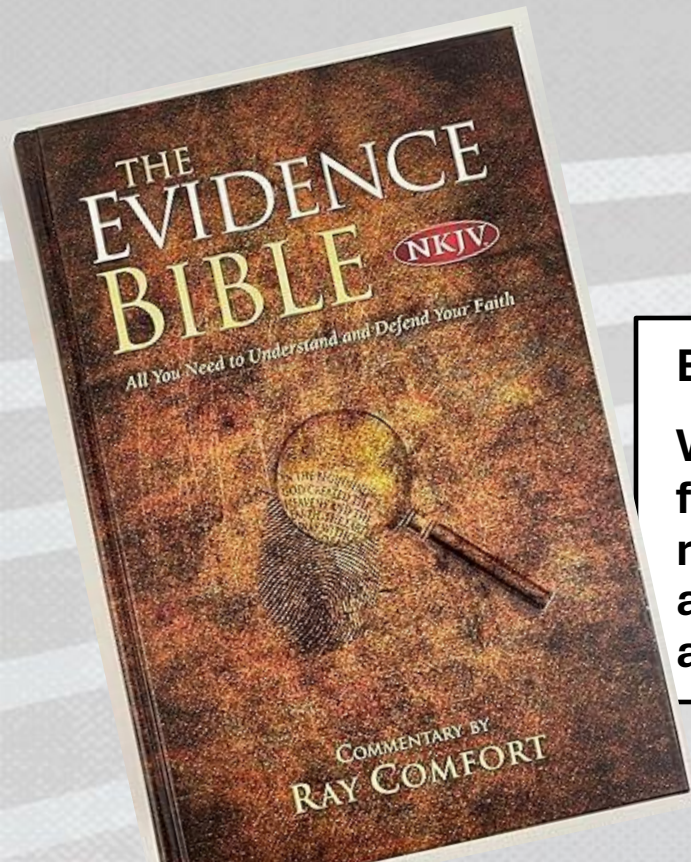
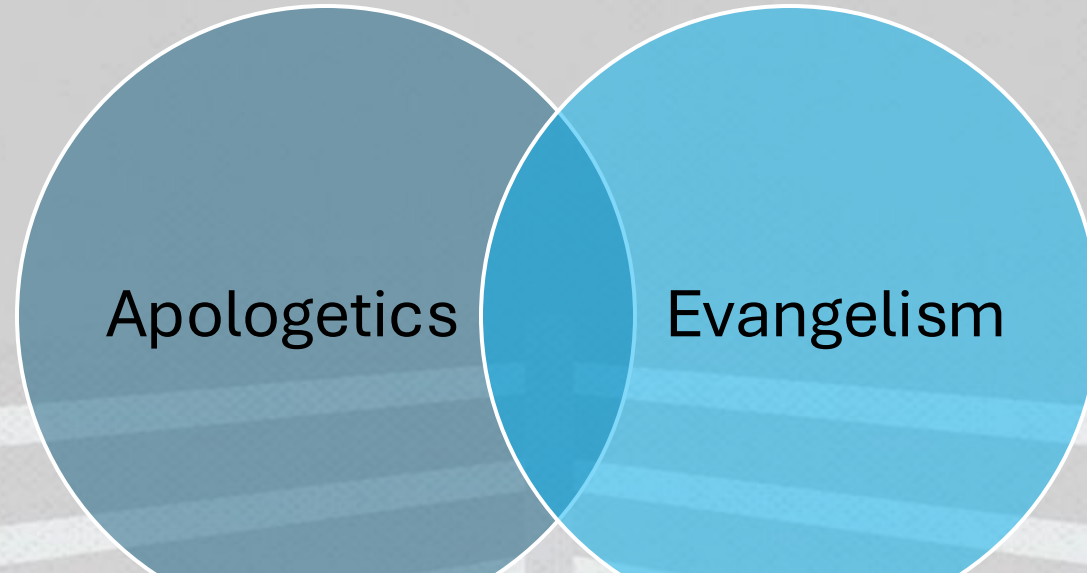
The Link:

Apologetic conversations can lead to good opportunities to share the gospel. And evangelistic conversations will often lead to apologetics when non-Christians respond with questions or criticisms that require a reasoned response.

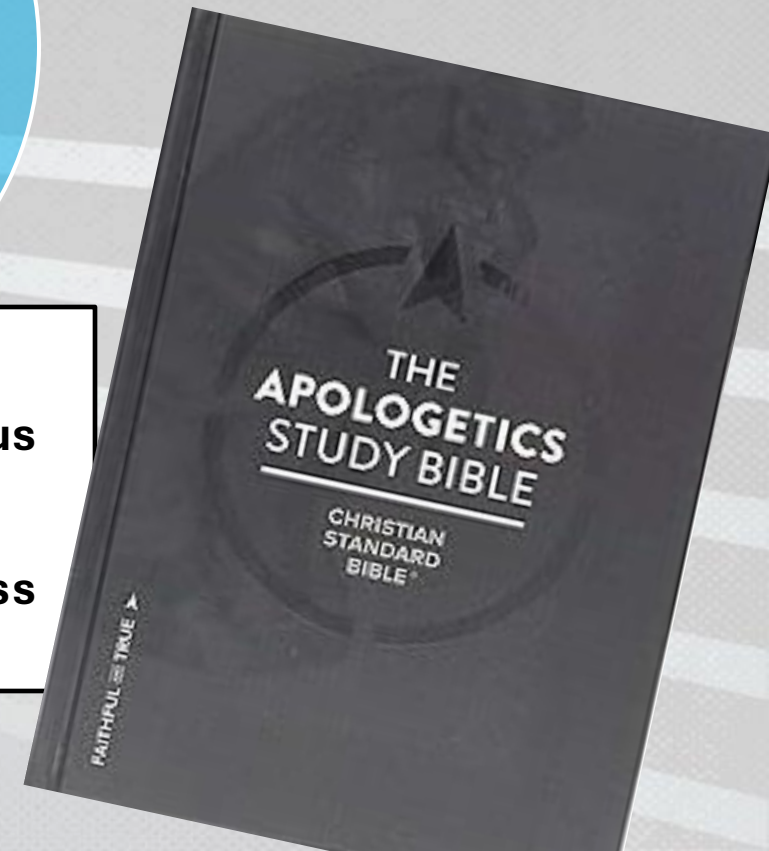
Ultimate Goal: Discipleship

- Telling others the truths of the gospel.
- Telling one specific message: The good news about what Jesus Christ has done to save sinners.
- Simply telling others the message about Jesus Christ. That's something every Christian—even a brand-new Christian—should be able to do.

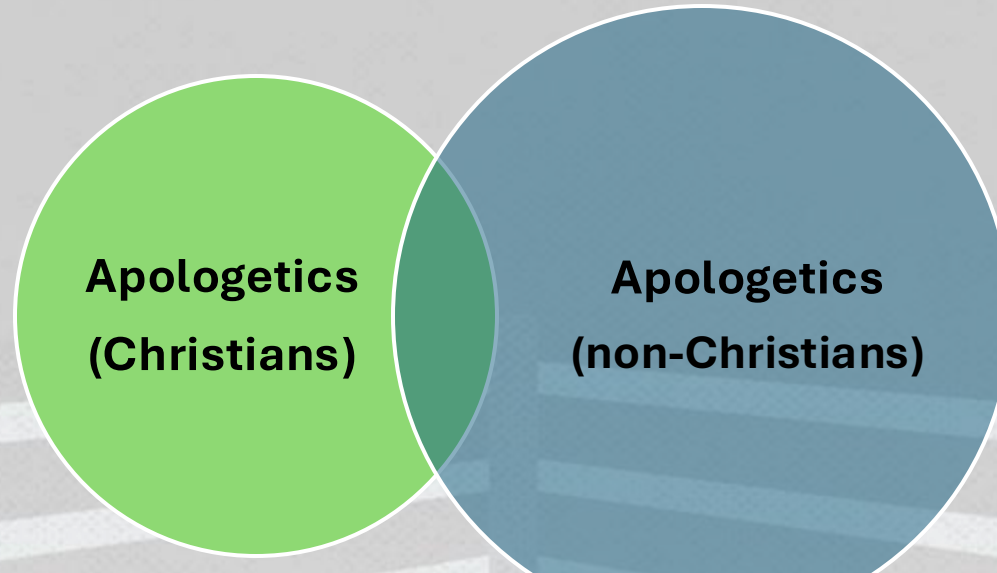
What is the Relationship Between Apologetics and Evangelism?



Bottom Line:
While Christians shouldn't let apologetics distract us from sharing the gospel, we should also work to be ready to contend and give a defense to anyone who asks us about the hope that is in us... with gentleness and respect (aka meekness and fear).



Bonus Tip: Apologetics with Other Christians



Iron Sharpening Iron Apologetics (Proverbs 27:17)

Christians can improve, refine, and strengthen each other through challenging interactions and discussions.

Ponder This: Do we really need to defend God & His Word?

*How do I defend
the Bible? The same
way I would defend
a Lion . . . I simply
open the cage and
let him out!*

C.H. Spurgeon



Romans 10:17

So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.

Hebrews 4:12

For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

The background of the slide features a grayscale silhouette of four men in a boxing ring. One man on the left is in a defensive stance, while another in the center is throwing a punch towards a third man on the right. A fourth man stands on the far right, possibly acting as a trainer or referee. The scene is set within a ring with visible ropes.

Why?

Goal #3: Grasp Why Apologetics Matters

Explore why defending the faith is vital for spiritual growth, evangelism, and strengthening the church in today's culture of doubt and relativism.

- Two Purposes: Truth for them, strengthening for us
- Why Two Different Apostle Pauls?
- Christian Apologetics Pyramid
- Three ways that people ask

Why Involve Yourself?: Two Purposes

Christian apologetics has a twofold purpose:

- Outwardly - it defends the truth of the Christian worldview and answers the objections raised by critics.
- Inwardly - it strengthens the faith of believers by showing that their faith rests upon a firm foundation.

Why Two Different Apostle Pauls?

Acts 13:1-14:7

Audience: Jews and God-fearing Gentiles in an Antioch synagogue.

Tactic: References the Old Testament and shared spiritual heritage to explain Jesus the Messiah.

Approach and Content: Summarizes the history of Israel from the Exodus, demonstrating how God's promises were fulfilled in Jesus's life, death, and resurrection. He speaks directly about the Messiah and the forgiveness of sins available through him.

Outcome: Successful, leading to many Jews and God-fearing Gentiles believing in the Lord.

Acts 17:16-34

Audience: Athenian Stoic and Epicurean (pagan) philosophers on Mars Hill.

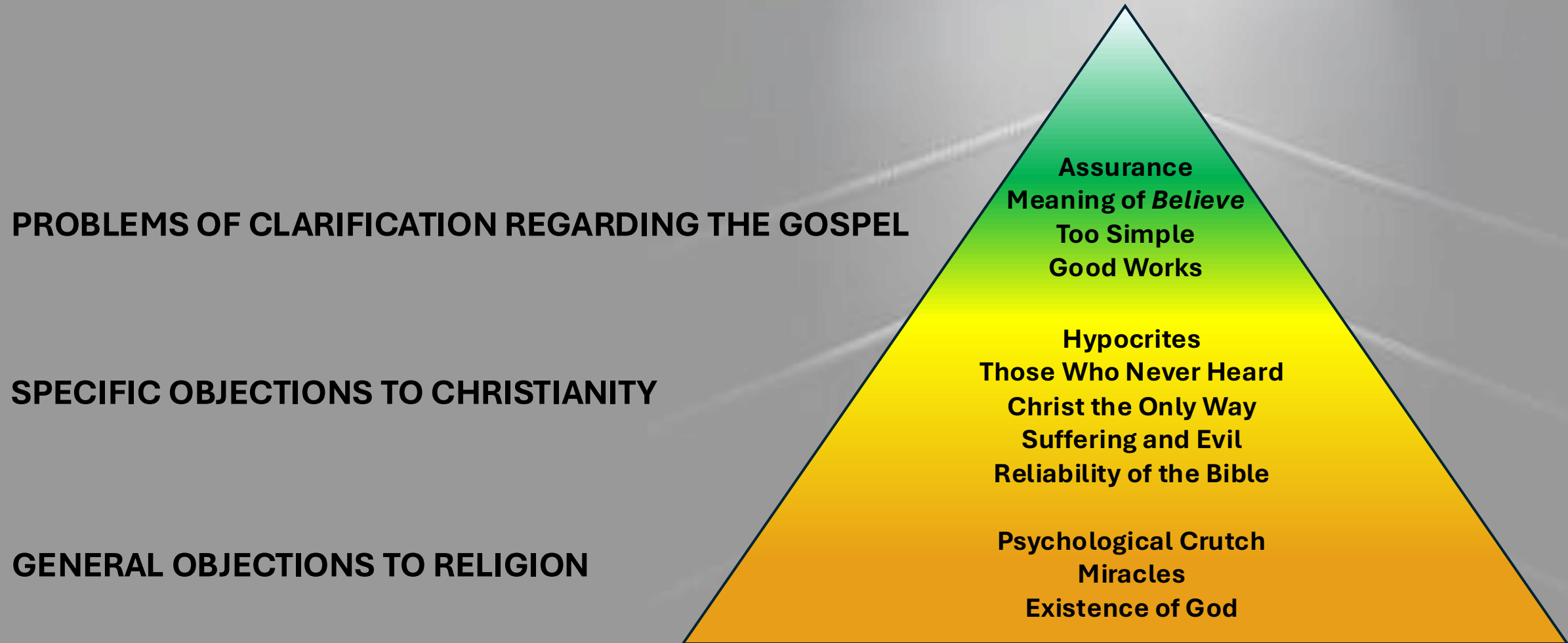
Tactic: Uses Greek poetry to introduce a common creator God; **commends** them for being “religious”; provoked by the city idolatry and calls them to repentance.

Approach and Content: Starts by acknowledging a pagan altar to "An Unknown God," using it as a bridge to introduce the true Creator God who cannot be confined to a temple. He uses Greek poets to connect with their existing worldview before discussing the God who will judge the world through the resurrected Jesus.

Outcome: Mixed results with some expressing interest in God as Creator, but they lose interest when he introduces the concept of the resurrection of the dead, dismissing him as a babbling.

Christian Apologetics Pyramid

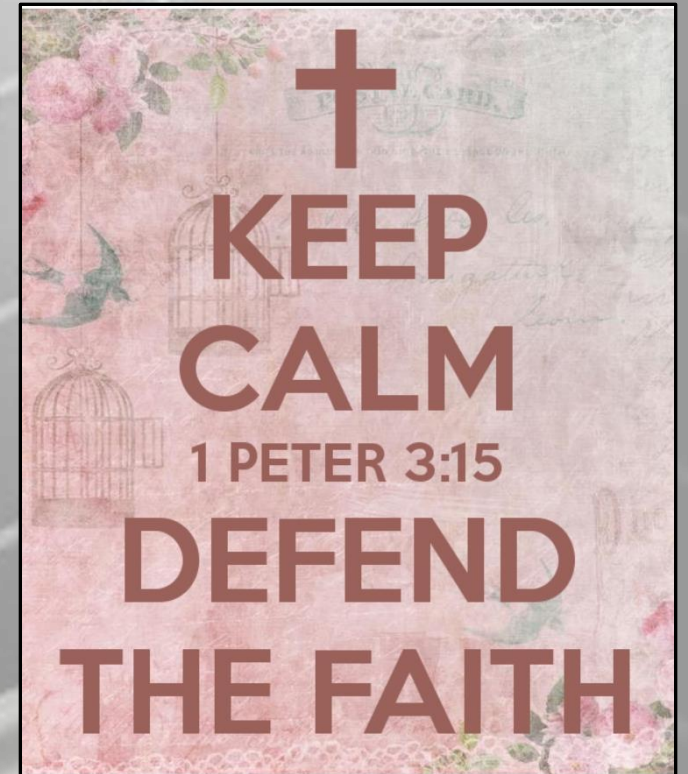
Typical Whys, Problems, and Objections



Three Whys & Ways People Ask

People typically ask questions in three different ways:

- To raise obstacles intended to defeat the Christian position
- To “show off” in a group or emphasize their own knowledge
- They have a real desire to find out answers



Break Time

**Get some water. Towel off.
Use some smelling salts if needed.
Come back and be ready for the
final round!**



When and How?

The background of the slide features a grayscale silhouette of four people in a boxing ring. One person in the center is captured in the middle of a boxing stance, throwing a right-hand punch towards the person on their right. The other three individuals are positioned around the ring, observing the action. The ring's ropes are visible, creating a grid-like pattern in the background.

Goal #4: Learn When & How to Engage Effectively – Develop practical skills for responding to questions and objections with clarity and confidence, while maintaining a Christlike attitude in conversations.

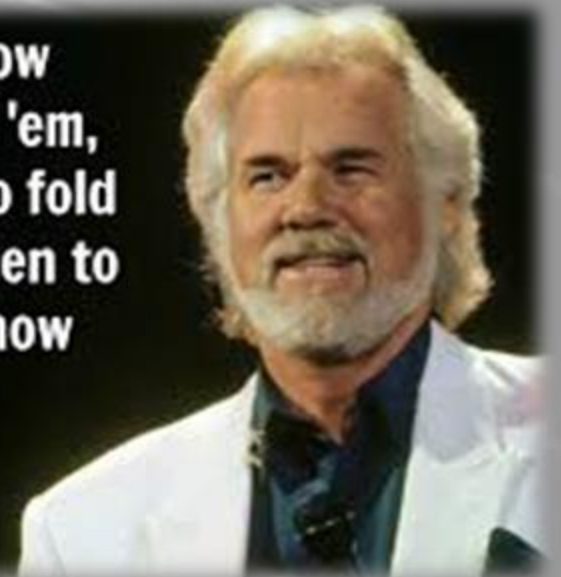
- The Gambler Dilemma: When & How
- Common mistakes and pitfalls
- Common apologetic tactics: suicide, Columbo, stone in the shoe
- How to get started

The Gambler Dilemma: When & How

When: Always / How: Gentleness & Respect or Contend?

- Proverbs 26:4: Don't answer the fool according to his foolishness or you will be foolish like him.
- Proverbs 26:5: Answer the fool according to his foolishness so that he sees it for what it is, foolishness.
- Matthew 10:14: And if anyone will not receive you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet when you leave that house or town.
- 1 Kings 19:3 : Elijah was afraid of Jezebel and ran for his life.

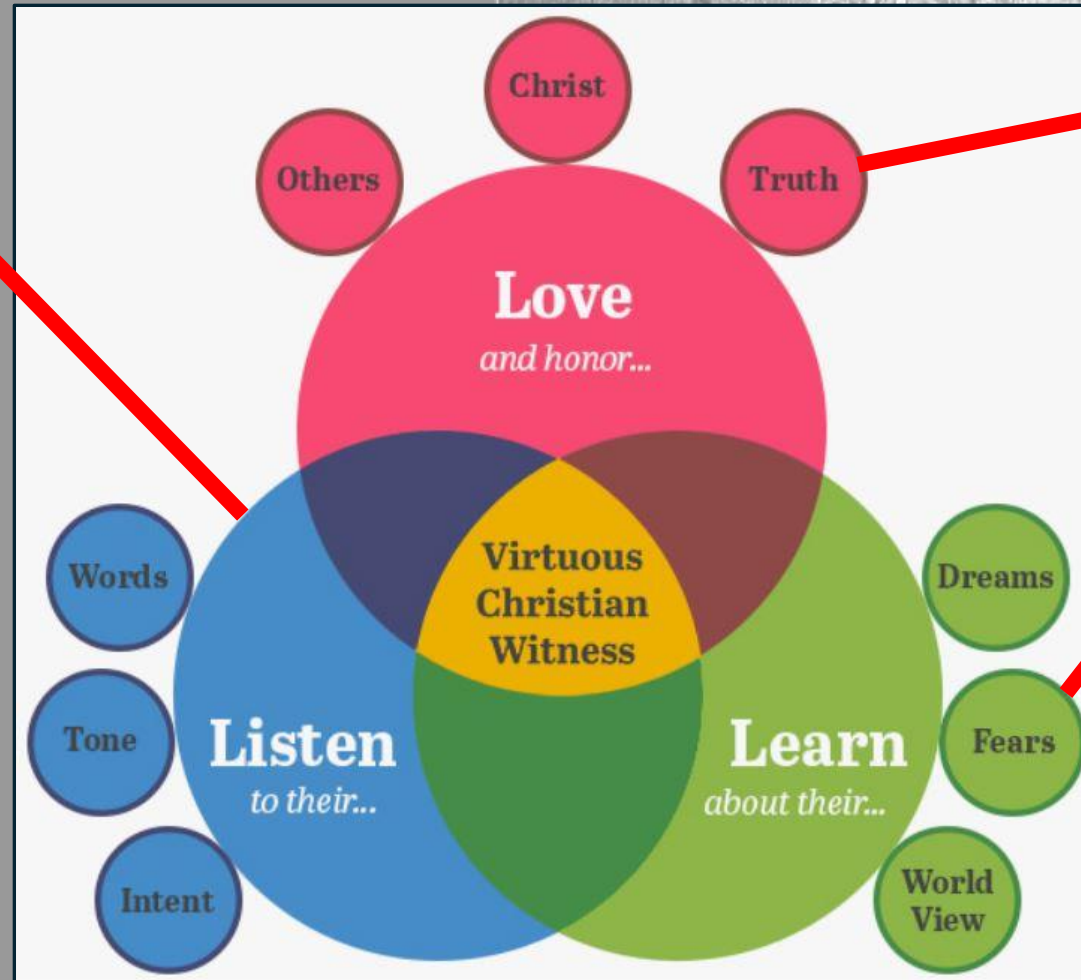
**You gotta know
when to hold 'em,
know when to fold
'em, know when to
walk away, know
when to run.**
— Kenny Rogers



Mistakes a Brand-New Apologist Usually Makes

Be quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger... (James 1:19)

Temptations: to defeat rather than disciple/ inform minds rather than transform hearts; “The Lord’s servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, correcting his opponents with gentleness.” (2 Tim. 2:23-25)



What is truth?

Examples:

- Have to give something up
- Disappoint/anger others
- Traditions die hard

Biggest Mistake: Pride
Be OK with saying you don't know but will get back to them... and do it!

Common Pitfalls a New Apologist Should Avoid



Credit: www.credocourses.com



Another Major Pitfall to Avoid



The Beans Warning

- Don't dump all of your beans on the table at once
- Try not to let them dump all their beans on the table
- Stay focused

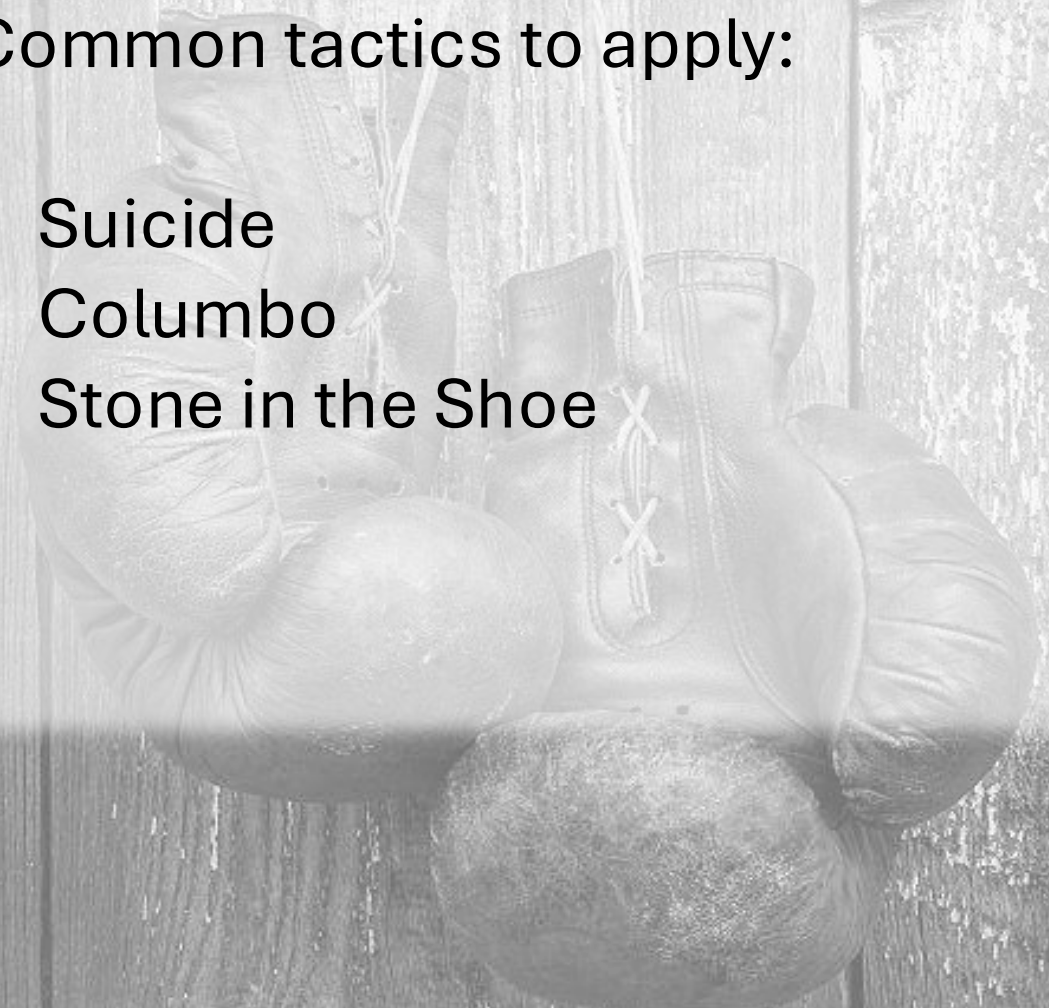
Apologetic Tactics

Greg Koukl - Stand to Reason
www.str.org



Common tactics to apply:

- Suicide
- Columbo
- Stone in the Shoe



Apologetic Tactic: Suicide

Learn to spot an argument that destroys itself:

- In a culture with relativistic views of truth, it is essential that you recognize claims and arguments that commit “suicide.”
- Suicidal arguments self-destruct by expressing some contradiction.
- Suicidal statements cannot live up to their own standards and thus, the minute they are uttered, are false.
- Philosophers refer to such arguments as self-refuting or self-referentially incoherent.



Self-Refuting

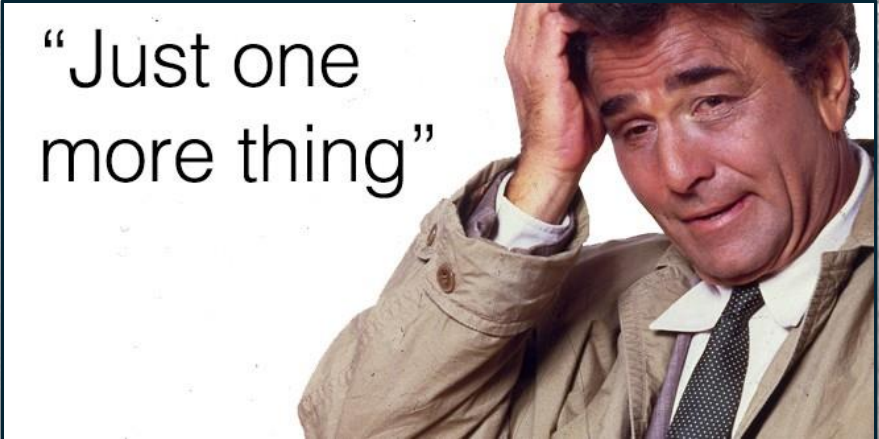
Apologetic Tactic: Suicide Examples

- *There is no truth.* (Is that a true statement?)
- *We can't know truth.* (Is that a truth you know?)
- *All truth is relative.* (Is that truth claim also relative?)
- *All truth claims are merely attempts to oppress others.* (Is that a truth claim you're using to oppress me?)
- *There are no absolutes.* (Are you absolutely sure?)
- *No one can know any truth about religion.* (How did you come to know that truth about religion?)
- *You can't know anything for sure.* (Is this something you know, for sure?)
- *You shouldn't tell people they are wrong.* (Like you're doing to me right now?)
- *I don't think we should push anyone's values.* (Is that one of your values? Are you pushing it on me?)
- *I don't believe anything unless it can be proven scientifically.* (What scientific experiment taught you that truth?)

Apologetic Tactic: Columbo

Using simple, leading questions is an almost effortless way to introduce spiritual topics to a conversation without seeming abrupt. Have a goal in mind. You are alerted to some weakness, flaw, or contradiction in another's view and want to expose in a disarming way.

- What do you mean by that?
- How did you come to that conclusion?



“Just one more thing”

This is for beginners at the shallow end of the pool.

Apologetic Tactic: Columbo: Deep End

After identifying the flaw or weakness in the other person's point of view, that's the target your questions will now be aimed at.

Example Claim: "There is no God."

**Don't be afraid to wade into
the deep end.
Take a few punches if
needed!**

There is powerful evidence for God's existence in that the universe had a beginning. The plan will be to leverage the scientific evidence for the genesis of the universe and argue that God is the most reasonable cause. That's the target.

Let the questioning begin!



Apologetic Tactic: Stone in Shoe

- A modest goal.
- Focus your efforts on giving just one thing to think about. That's plenty good for starters.
- Annoy them a little bit, but in a good way.
- When they leave, you want something said to be poking to keep them thinking.
- Try to appeal to the conscience instead of the intellect
- Don't worry about the endgame.
- Follow up.
- Leave the results up to God.



True Story: Stone in the Shoe



Conclusion: How to Get Started

Next Steps:

- Don't be overwhelmed or get discouraged
- Pray for wisdom and opportunities
- Read and study your Bible
- Choose one area mentioned and look into it further
- Find a mentor
- Purchase a couple of books to learn from
- Take your lumps; don't get angry or you both lose
- Articulate the reason for the hope in you = a changed life

Now get out there and do something!



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TITLE
Subtitle Reference

Questions?



**MICKEY
GOLDMILL**

**Contact me for
all of your
future training
needs.**

