



CHRISTIAN APOLOGETICS



This book belongs to



Dear Believer,

I want to thank you for taking a class with (and a chance on) The C3 Seminary. Theological education today is often either inaccessible or impersonal for the average Christian. Many are unable to afford a traditional seminary or enroll due to the demands of work and their stage of life. Though online education has improved and offers real benefits, it often lacks the essential elements of personal and communal formation. The C3 Seminary exists to bridge this gap by providing an accessible, biblical, and communal church-based theological education as well as to serve as an on-ramp to traditional seminary.

The C3 Seminary is designed to be communal (*communio*), form your deepest beliefs and convictions (*convictio*), and train you for fruitful ministry as we complete the Great Commission together (*commissio*). Whether you are a part of the crowd, a cohort, or among those called to vocational ministry, The C3 Seminary exists to equip any member of the local church without them having to leave their local church. So whether you are taking this class to personal growth or toward credit at Southern Seminary, we welcome you and pray that this class helps you grow in the knowledge of God and bear fruit (Col. 1:9-10).

For any believer,

Pastor John

Week 1

Atheist Role Play

Eric Hernandez

(To learn more about Eric, visit his website at ehmapologetics.org)

1. Our Call to Be Ready

1 Peter 3:15

As Christians, we are called to be ready to give a reason for the hope that is in us.

This is a _____, not a suggestion.

Key Idea: We do not have to know the answer to every question, but we should be prepared to talk thoughtfully about what we believe and why.

2. Atheist Role Play

As you participate in or observe the role play, pay attention to both what is said and how the conversation feels.

How did the conversation make you feel?

What questions, issues, or objections were raised?

What did you learn or realize?

3. Thinking About the Real Problem

Matthew 5:13

Jesus calls His followers the salt of the earth.

At some point, we have to ask, "What's wrong with the _____?"

Key Idea: Before we can respond well to the world around us, we need to understand what people actually believe and why they believe it.

Notes:

4. Two Goals for Our Conversations

Colossians 4:5-6

Our goal is to keep the _____ the main thing.

Goal #1: Make the Most of the _____.

We want to recognize opportunities to have meaningful conversations about God, faith, and the gospel.

Goal #2: Know _____ to answer instead of _____ to answer.

You don't need to know all the right answers.

You need to learn how to _____ the right _____.

Key Idea: Good questions can...

- Help you understand what someone actually believes.
- Keep you from making assumptions.
- Encourage the other person to think more deeply.
- Give you time to think before responding.
- Turn an argument into a real conversation.

Two Powerful Questions

1. "What do you _____ by that?"

Key Idea: This helps you understand exactly what the person means instead of assuming you already know.

2. "How did you come to that _____?"

Key Idea: This moves the conversation from simply what someone believes to why they believe it.

Notes / Examples:

Bringing It All Together

When talking with someone who disagrees with Christianity:

- Be ready to explain the hope you have.
- Listen before you answer.
- Don't assume you know what someone means.

- Ask thoughtful questions.
- Seek to understand why the person believes what they believe.
- Look for opportunities to keep the _____ at the center of the conversation.

My Biggest Takeaway.

Reflection & Discussion

1. What did the role play reveal about how you normally feel when someone challenges your Christian beliefs?
2. Why might asking good questions sometimes be more effective than immediately giving an answer?
3. How can we keep the gospel at the center of conversations without making the other person feel like we aren't listening to them?

Week 2

Five Tactical Tools for Apologetic Conversations

Eric Hernandez

(To learn more about Eric, visit his website at ehmapologetics.org)

The Biblical Foundation

Colossians 4:5-6

Paul's overall theme:

Keep the _____ Thing the _____ Thing.

Two important goals:

1. Make the most use of the _____.

2. Know _____ to answer—not simply _____ to answer.

Key Idea

You do not have to know the answer to every objection.

You need to learn how to have thoughtful conversations that keep moving toward the truth.

Tactical Tool #1: Use Questions to Make a Point

A question can often make a greater impact than simply making a _____.

Key Principle:

Never make a statement when a question will do the job.

Good questions can help:

- Clarify what someone believes
- Guide the conversation
- Help someone recognize a problem in his or her own position
- Keep the conversation from becoming an argument

Instead of simply telling someone your conclusion, use questions that help the other person

_____ the point for himself or herself.

Remember

You don't need to have all the right _____.

You need to know how to ask the right _____.

Notes / Example Questions:

Tactical Tool #2: Reword the Position

Before responding to someone's claim, make sure you actually _____ what the person is saying.

Rewording the position can help in two ways.

1. Expose a Hidden Problem

Restate the person's position in a way that makes the problem with the claim easier to _____.

Sometimes simply hearing the position stated clearly can reveal its weakness.

2. Apply the Same Principle Somewhere Else

Take the _____ behind the person's position and apply it to another example.

If the principle does not work consistently in the other situation, there may be a problem with the original argument.

Key Idea

Before arguing against someone's position, make sure you can explain it accurately.

Notes:

Tactical Tool #3: Emphasize Rebuttal

There is an important difference between refutation and rebuttal.

Refutation

Showing that someone's _____ is false.

Rebuttal

Showing that the person has not given enough evidence to prove the _____.

Why Emphasize Rebuttal?

You do not always have to prove that the other person is _____.

Sometimes you only need to show that the person has not proven that he or she is _____.

This keeps the responsibility for defending the claim with the person who made it.

Key Idea

You can sometimes say:

"That might be true—but how does that prove your conclusion?"

You do not have to carry the entire burden of the conversation.

Notes:

Tactical Tool #4: Recognize When There Is No Argument

Not every statement is actually an argument.

Sometimes a person is simply making an _____.

An assertion is a claim without supporting reasons.

Helpful Responses

You might simply ask:

" _____?"

or

"So what?"

or

"Therefore, what?"

Then allow the person to explain why the statement is supposed to count against Christianity.

If no actual objection is given, there may be nothing you need to _____.

Silence Can Be Useful

Sometimes it is best to sit in _____ and allow the other person to think through what he or she just said.

Key Idea

You do not have to answer an argument that has not actually been made.

Tactical Tool #5: Identify Logical Fallacies

A logical fallacy is an _____ in reasoning.

An argument based on faulty logic cannot successfully support a claim.

Learning to recognize common logical fallacies can help you quickly identify when someone's conclusion does not follow from the reasons given.

Key Idea

Sometimes the simplest response is to point out the problem in the _____ of the argument.

Examples / Notes:

Bringing It All Together

Five Tactical Tools

1. Use _____ to make a point.
2. _____ the position to expose the problem.
3. Emphasize _____ over refutation.
4. Recognize when someone has only made an _____.
5. Identify logical _____.

The Bigger Goal

These tools are not primarily about winning arguments.

They help us make the most of opportunities to talk about Christ while responding with wisdom and grace.

Colossians 4:5-6

The goal is to:

- Make wise use of our _____
- Know _____ to answer
- Keep the _____ at the center

My Biggest Takeaway.

Reflection & Discussion

1. Which of these five tools would be most helpful for you in a conversation with someone who challenges your Christian beliefs? Why?
2. Why can asking a good question sometimes be more effective than immediately giving an answer?
3. How can these tools help us keep an apologetic conversation focused on the gospel rather than simply trying to win an argument?

Week 3

A Case for the Existence of God

Allen Hainline

1. What Can We Know About God?

Romans 1:18–20

What does this passage say we can learn about God from creation?

Psalms 19:1–4

“The heavens declare the glory of God.”

Two Ways God Reveals Himself

General Revelation: God reveals Himself through _____

Special Revelation: God reveals Himself through _____

Key Idea: Creation points us toward God, while Scripture tells us more specifically who God is.

Christianity & Science

Some people believe that Christianity and science are enemies.

The lecture argues that historically, Christianity actually helped _____ modern science.

Many important early scientists believed that the universe was created by God and could therefore be _____ and understood.

Can Science Disprove God?

Science is an important way of learning about the world, but it is not the _____ way we know things.

Other reasons for believing in God can include:

- Philosophical arguments
- Religious experience
- Evidence from Scripture

Four Lines of Evidence for God

The lecture will focus on four major areas:

1. The _____ of the universe
2. The _____ of the universe
3. The origin of _____
4. Human _____ and free will

1. The Beginning of the Universe

Modern science indicates that the universe had a _____.

This includes the beginning of:

- Space
- Time
- Matter
- Energy

Think About It

If space, time, matter, and energy all had a beginning, then the cause of the universe could not simply be something _____ the universe.

Main Point:

The beginning of the universe points toward _____

2. A Fine-Tuned Universe

What Does "Fine-Tuned" Mean?

The basic conditions and laws of our universe appear to be set within extremely precise ranges that allow _____ to exist.

The universe is fine-tuned in areas such as:

- Its starting conditions
- The laws and forces of nature

- Stable atoms and elements
- Stars that can provide energy for long periods of time

Why Does This Matter?

If these conditions were even slightly different, the universe could be very different—and in many cases, _____ could not exist.

The lecture considers three possible explanations for fine-tuning:

Necessity — It had to be this way.

Chance — It happened randomly.

Design — It was intentionally arranged.

The argument of the lecture is that _____ is the best explanation for the fine-tuning of the universe.

Something that stood out to me:

3. Where Did Life Come From?

This question is different from asking how living things change over time.

The question here is:

How did the first life arise from non-living material?

Some of the challenges discussed in the lecture include:

- Getting the right building blocks for life
- Connecting those building blocks together
- Getting them in the right sequence
- Creating a system capable of sustaining life

Main Question:

Can unguided natural processes adequately explain the origin of the first life?

Notes:

4. What Makes Humans Different?

The final argument focuses on two things we experience every day:

Free Will

Do human beings actually make meaningful _____?

If everything is only matter operating according to natural laws, where does genuine human choice come from?

Consciousness

We don't simply exist—we know that we exist.

We experience:

- Thoughts
- Beliefs
- Intentions
- Emotions
- Self-awareness

The lecture asks how purely physical matter could produce a genuinely _____ mind.

The Big Question

Does our experience as human beings make more sense if we are simply physical beings—or if we were created by a personal God?

Bringing It All Together

Four Pieces of the Case

The universe had a beginning

→ Why is there something rather than nothing?

The universe is fine-tuned

→ Why does the universe seem so well suited for life?

Life came from non-life

→ How did the first living thing arise?

Humans are conscious and experience free will

→ Why are we thinking, choosing, self-aware persons?

Final Takeaway

Which argument did you find most interesting or convincing?

Questions I Still Have:

Reflection & Discussion

1. Which of the four lines of evidence for God stood out to you most, and why?
2. How does seeing evidence for God in creation strengthen or challenge the way you think about the relationship between faith and science?
3. How could something from this lecture help you have a thoughtful conversation with someone who doubts or questions the existence of God?

Week 4

The Problem of Evil & Suffering

Allen Hainline

1. The Big Question

How can a good, all-powerful God allow _____?

Suffering is one of the hardest challenges people face when thinking about God.

But every worldview has to explain evil and suffering.

If there is no God, what makes something truly good or evil rather than simply something we like or dislike?

C. S. Lewis and the "Straight Line"

C. S. Lewis realized that calling the world unjust assumes there is a true standard of _____.

Key Idea: If real evil exists, there must be some real standard of good by which we recognize it.

2. Evil and the Moral Argument

The basic argument:

- If there is no God, there is no objective moral standard.
- We recognize that some things are truly _____.
- Calling something evil assumes a real standard of right and wrong.
- That objective moral standard points toward _____.

Notes:

3. Two Ways People Struggle with Evil

The Emotional Problem

Suffering can make it difficult to _____ God.

Someone who is hurting may need compassion and presence before they need an argument.

Reminder from Job: Don't respond to suffering like Job's _____.

The Intellectual Problem

This asks whether God and evil can both exist.

Logical Problem: Claims that God and evil cannot both _____.

Evidential Problem: Claims that the amount of suffering makes God's existence seem less _____.

4. Does Evil Disprove God?

The lecture argues that the existence of God and the existence of evil are not necessarily contradictory.

God may have good and morally sufficient _____ for allowing suffering for a time.

One possible reason is human free will.

Real freedom allows people to choose love and goodness, but it also allows people to choose _____.

Key Idea: God allowing evil is not the same thing as God causing or approving evil.

5. Why Might God Allow Suffering?

A. Suffering Can Have a Purpose

Pain can _____ us that something is wrong.

Suffering may also:

- Shape our character
- Change our priorities
- Show us our need for God
- Help us know God more deeply

Job's suffering eventually led him to a deeper _____ of God.

B. Much Suffering Comes from Human Sin

People cause or worsen suffering through:

- Selfishness
- Violence

- Greed
- Neglect
- Poor choices

Key Idea: Much of the suffering in the world is connected to human rebellion against God.

Notes:

C. Christianity Recognizes Spiritual Evil

Christianity teaches that evil spiritual forces are _____.

But God is greater, and Christianity teaches that He will ultimately defeat evil.

D. This Life Is Not the Whole Story

Christianity views present suffering in light of _____.

2 Corinthians 4:17 contrasts present suffering with the eternal glory to come.

The Christian hope is that God will ultimately:

E. God's Purpose Is Bigger Than Our Comfort

We sometimes assume that if God loves us, He should make our lives _____.

But God's purposes include:

- Drawing people to Himself
- Developing our character
- Teaching us dependence on Him
- Preparing us for eternity

Something that stood out to me:

6. God Can Bring Good from Evil

Genesis 50:20

Joseph tells his brothers that what they intended for evil, God intended for

_____.

God can bring things like compassion, generosity, courage, service, and spiritual growth out of suffering.

This does not mean that evil itself is good.

It means God can _____ evil and bring good from it.

7. We Don't See the Whole Picture

Human beings see only a small part of what is happening across time and space.

We cannot always know all the effects that one event may have.

Key Idea: Not knowing why God allowed something does not mean that God has no _____ for allowing it.

The book of Job reminds us that our understanding is limited.

8. God Enters Into Our Suffering

Christianity's answer to suffering is more than an argument.

God entered our world and experienced suffering through _____.

At the cross, Jesus experienced pain, injustice, rejection, and death.

Key Idea: We may not always know why God permits suffering, but the cross shows us that God is not _____ to our suffering.

Bringing It All Together

Christianity teaches that:

- Evil does not logically disprove God.
- Recognizing real evil points to a real standard of good.
- Human freedom and sin contribute to suffering.
- God can bring good from suffering.
- Our perspective is limited.
- This life is not the end of the story.
- God entered into human suffering through Jesus.
- God will ultimately _____ evil.

My Biggest Takeaway

Reflection & Discussion

1. Which idea from this lecture was most helpful to you in thinking about evil and suffering?
2. How should our response be different when someone is personally hurting rather than simply asking an intellectual question about suffering?
3. How does the cross help us trust God even when we do not understand why He allows suffering?

Week 5

The Case for the Bible as God's Word

Allen Hainline

The Big Question

Why should we believe that the Bible is actually the Word of God?

This session looks at three main lines of evidence:

1. Fulfilled _____
2. Historical _____
3. Confidence in the New Testament _____

1. Fulfilled Prophecy

One reason to believe the Bible is divinely inspired is that it predicts events before they happen.

Four Marks of Strong Prophecy

A strong example of fulfilled prophecy should have:

1. Clear _____
2. Fulfillment well after the _____
3. Fulfillment that was not _____
4. Something genuinely hard to _____

Examples discussed include:

- Egypt
- Edom
- Babylon
- The Philistines
- Israel
- Tyre

Key Idea

The more specific and unlikely a prediction is, the stronger the evidence when it is fulfilled.

2. The Prophecies of Daniel

Daniel records detailed predictions about future _____.

Daniel 8

Daniel describes:

- A goat from the west representing _____
- A prominent horn representing _____ the Great
- A ram representing the Medes and _____
- The great horn being broken
- Four horns rising in its place
- A later ruler who would attack the temple

The presentation identifies this later ruler as _____ IV Epiphanes.

His actions fit Daniel's description closely, including:

- Ending the daily sacrifices
- Desecrating the temple
- Dying without being killed in battle

Because these predictions are so specific, some skeptics have argued that Daniel must have been written _____ the events happened.

3. Was Daniel Written Late?

One argument against an early date for Daniel involved King _____.

Some historians once believed Daniel made a mistake because Nabonidus was known as the last king of Babylon.

Then the _____ Cylinder was discovered.

It showed that Belshazzar served as co-ruler while his father Nabonidus was away.

That helps explain why Daniel was offered the position of _____ in command.

Key Idea

Daniel appears to know details about ancient Babylon that later Greek historians did not know.

4. New Evidence from Ancient Manuscripts

The Dead Sea Scrolls contain ancient copies of biblical books, including Daniel.

Recent analysis using a computer program called _____ has suggested earlier dates for some manuscripts than previously estimated.

A manuscript of Daniel containing portions of chapters 7-12 was dated to around _____ B.C.

This is significant because those chapters include prophecies connected with Antiochus IV.

Key Idea

The earlier the manuscript evidence for Daniel, the harder it becomes to argue that the prophecies were simply written after the events.

Notes:

5. Why Historical Accuracy Matters

The New Testament is deeply connected to real history.

The presentation focuses especially on the book of _____.

If the author consistently gets difficult historical details correct, that supports the idea that the book was written:

- _____ to the events
- With access to reliable or eyewitness information
- By someone careful about historical details

Acts is especially important because it gives us a major historical record of the rise of the early _____.

6. Acts and Real Historical People

Acts names many people who are also known from sources outside the Bible.

The presentation notes that Acts mentions _____ people who have been historically verified outside Scripture.

Examples include:

- Agrippa I
- Agrippa II
- Annas
- Caiaphas
- Claudius
- Felix
- Gallio
- Gamaliel
- Sergius Paulus

Key Idea

Acts places Christianity in the world of real people, rulers, cities, and events.

7. Acts Gets Small Details Right

Acts includes highly specific details that would have been difficult for a later writer to guess correctly.

Examples include:

Geography

Acts correctly places _____ in Phrygia during the time of Paul.

It uses the correct local form of the name _____.

It correctly notes that the _____ language was spoken there.

Sea Travel

Acts correctly identifies:

- The proper ports travelers would use
- Local sailing routes

- Landmarks sailors would recognize
- The most practical way to travel between certain cities

Key Idea

These are the kinds of details someone familiar with the actual places and time period would be expected to know.

8. Acts Gets Local Titles Right

Different cities in the Roman world used different titles for local officials.

Acts uses the correct terms for officials in places such as:

- Philippi
- Thessalonica
- Athens
- Corinth
- Ephesus

One example is Acts 18:12, which correctly calls _____ the proconsul of Corinth.

Archaeology confirms that he held that position around A.D. _____.

Key Idea

Luke repeatedly shows detailed knowledge of the local political world he describes.

9. A Scholar Changes His Mind About Acts

Archaeologist and classical scholar William Ramsay began his research with a negative view of Acts.

After studying the evidence, he concluded that:

“Luke’s history is unsurpassed in respect to its trustworthiness.”

Key Idea

Historical and archaeological evidence repeatedly supports Luke’s careful reporting.

10. How Do We Know the Right Books Are in the New Testament?

The word canon refers to the recognized collection of books that belong in Scripture.

Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox Christians all agree on the same _____ books of the New Testament.

A helpful way to think about the canon is:

The church did not _____ the canon.

The church _____ the canon.

Key Idea

The authority of the books did not come from the church. The church recognized books that already carried authority.

11. How Were New Testament Books Recognized?

Three major criteria were used.

1. Apostolic

Was it written by an _____ or a close associate?

Examples:

• Mark was connected with _____

• Luke received information from Paul and other eyewitnesses

2. Orthodox

Was the book consistent with the teaching of _____?

A book that contradicted apostolic teaching was rejected.

3. Universal

Was the book widely _____ throughout the early church?

Key Idea

The canon was not a random selection made centuries later. The books were recognized because of their connection to Christ and the apostles and their widespread use in the church.

12. Did New Testament Writers Think They Were Writing Scripture?

There are signs within the New Testament itself that the writers understood their teaching to carry divine authority.

Luke

Luke says he received his information from:

“eyewitnesses and ministers of the word.”

Paul later quotes words found in Luke and calls them _____.

Paul

Paul tells his readers that rejecting his teaching means rejecting not man, but _____.

Peter

In 2 Peter 3:16, Peter refers to Paul’s letters alongside:

“the other _____.”

Key Idea

The idea that New Testament writings were Scripture did not begin centuries after the apostles. It appears within the New Testament itself.

13. The Early Church Recognized These Books Early

Early Christian writers quoted and referred to New Testament books very quickly.

Polycarp

Around A.D. 108, Polycarp quotes or alludes to about _____ New Testament books.

Ignatius

Ignatius also refers to sayings found in the Gospels.

By the second century:

- The four _____ circulated together
- Paul’s letters circulated together
- Christians collected these writings into early books called _____

- These writings were being read in churches as Scripture

Key Idea

The New Testament books were being recognized and used very early in Christian history.

14. What About Other “Gospels”?

Early heretical movements such as Marcionism and Gnosticism appeared in the second century.

But the presentation points out that:

- Even early heretics did not appeal to a competing set of widely accepted gospels.
- Early Christian collections do not show canonical and non-canonical gospels being bundled together as equals.
- The surviving manuscript evidence strongly favors the four canonical _____.

Key Idea

There is no evidence that dozens of equally accepted gospels existed and were later arbitrarily narrowed down.

Bringing It All Together

Why Can We Have Confidence in the Bible?

1. Fulfilled _____

Daniel and other biblical books contain detailed predictions connected with later historical events.

2. Historical _____

Acts repeatedly gets difficult details right about people, places, geography, travel, and government.

3. The New Testament _____

The books of the New Testament were connected to the apostles, consistent with the teaching of Christ, and widely recognized in the early church.

The Big Idea

The Bible does not ask us to believe in events disconnected from history.

Its claims are tied to:

real people, real places, real events, and real documents.

The evidence gives us strong reasons to take seriously the Bible's claim to be the _____ of God.

My Biggest Takeaway.

Reflection & Discussion

1. Which type of evidence in this lecture—fulfilled prophecy, historical accuracy, or the New Testament canon—was most helpful to you? Why?
2. Why do the small historical details in Acts matter when considering whether Luke was a reliable writer?
3. How would you respond to someone who says, "Church leaders just decided which books belonged in the Bible hundreds of years later"?

Week 6

A Sturdy Witness Chair

John David Rogers

1. "Here I Stand"

In 1521, Martin Luther was called to defend his convictions. His famous response ended:

"Here I stand. God help me. Amen."

1 Peter 3:15

Christians are called to always be prepared to give a _____ for the hope that is in us.

The word "defense" is where we get the word _____.

But Peter is concerned with more than simply having the right answers.

Key Idea: A credible Christian witness involves both what we _____ and how we _____.

2. Why Did Peter Write 1 Peter?

The Christians Peter was writing to were experiencing _____ because of their faith.

Peter wrote to both encourage and instruct them.

1 Peter 5:12

"This is the true grace of God. Stand firm in it."

Peter wanted Christians to know how to live faithfully in a world that did not share their faith.

A Helpful Summary

First Peter is a letter from a:

_____ of Christ

to

_____ of Christ

about how to

_____ to Christ.

3. The Sturdy Witness Chair

Imagine being called to the witness stand to testify about Jesus.

Peter gives us a picture of what makes our Christian witness sturdy and credible.

The Back of the Chair

The _____ God

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit support and empower our witness.

The Seat of the Chair

Verbal _____ of the Gospel

Christian witness requires us to actually tell others the good news of Jesus.

The Four Legs

1. Habits of the _____

2. Habits of the _____

Key Idea: Our lives do not make the gospel true, but they can help make the gospel we proclaim appear _____ to those who hear it.

4. Leg One: Holiness

1 Peter 1:15-16

"You also be holy in all your conduct."

Peter calls Christians to lives of _____.

1 Peter 2:12

Peter tells believers to keep their conduct honorable so that unbelievers may see their good deeds and ultimately glorify God.

Key Idea: The truth of the gospel can be seen in the church's _____ witness to the gospel.

J. C. Ryle

Ryle writes:

"Your life is an argument that none can escape."

Our lives are making an argument about the faith we profess.

A Christian can proclaim the truth with his or her words while _____ that message through an inconsistent life.

The Bottom Line

_____ counts as evidence.

Notes:

5. Leg Two: Honor

1 Peter 2:17

"Honor everyone."

Peter repeatedly calls Christians to treat others with honor.

Honor includes:

- Dignity
- Respect
- Gratitude
- Esteem

1 Peter 3:15

Peter tells Christians to make a defense for their hope, but to do it with:

_____ and _____.

Peter cares not only about what we say, but also how we say it.

Romans 12:10

"Outdo one another in showing honor."

One writer describes this as:

"A competition where everyone _____!"

Key Idea: The way Christians treat other people can support—or undermine—the gospel we proclaim.

Notes:

6. Leg Three: Habitus of the Body

The word habitus refers to a settled _____ or way of living.

Over time, something we repeatedly practice can become almost second nature.

The goal of Christian discipleship is not simply to stop in every situation and ask:

"What would Jesus do?"

Instead, we want to become people who increasingly _____ know what Jesus would do—and then do it.

1 Peter 4:1

"Arm yourselves with the same way of thinking."

Peter calls Christians to prepare themselves to follow Christ even when doing so brings suffering.

The paper summarizes this pattern:

Live _____

Miss _____

Stand _____

Taken _____

Key Idea: We develop habits of obedience so that we remain faithful even when following Jesus becomes costly.

7. Leg Four: Habitus of the Soul

1 Peter 4:19

"Entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good."

Peter wants Christians to develop a settled habit of _____ God.

The early church gives us examples of Christians whose belief in the _____ of Jesus shaped even the way they faced death.

Their willingness to suffer rather than deny Christ became part of their Christian

_____.

How Are These Habits Formed?

They do not develop overnight.

They require _____.

Hebrews 12:11

Discipline eventually produces the:

“peaceful fruit of righteousness.”

Key Idea: We practice following Christ until faithfulness increasingly becomes
_____ nature.

Notes:

8. The Church Itself Is an Apologetic

Peter is not only talking about individual Christians.

He is writing to a Christian _____.

From the earliest days of Christianity, believers pointed to the way Christians lived together as evidence for the truth of the gospel.

The life of the _____ can become a visible witness to Christ.

Lesslie Newbigin

“The only hermeneutic of the gospel is a congregation of men and women who believe it and live by it.”

We can bring:

- Bibles
- Conferences
- Books
- Scientific evidence
- Historical evidence
- Philosophical arguments

But we cannot bring less than a believing _____ that actually lives what it says it believes.

Key Idea

"Apologetics is more about _____ we bring than _____ we bring."

9. What About Christian Hypocrisy?

Being a credible witness does not mean Christians must be sinlessly perfect.

Instead, the goal is to be a whole-person disciple rather than a half-hearted _____.

A person can acknowledge Jesus with his lips while denying Him through his _____.

Key Idea: It is difficult to proclaim the gospel when our lives have already _____ what we are saying.

Bringing It All Together

The Sturdy Witness Chair

BACK

The _____ God

SEAT

Verbal _____ of the gospel

FOUR LEGS

1. Holiness
2. Honor
3. Habitus of the body
4. Habitus of the soul

The Big Idea

First Peter is a letter from a witness of Christ to witnesses of Christ about how to bear witness to Christ.

Peter calls Christians not simply to know how to give a defense, but to live lives that _____ the defense we give.

My Biggest Takeaway.

Reflection & Discussion

1. Which of the four “legs” of the witness chair—holiness, honor, habits of the body, or habits of the soul—most challenged you personally? Why?
2. How can the way Christians live either strengthen or weaken the credibility of the gospel we proclaim?
3. What would it look like for our church to become a stronger “living apologetic” for the gospel in our community?