

## READY TO RESPOND: DEFENDING THE FAITH WITH GRACE AND TRUTH

Winter 2026  
Rev. Todd Lovell

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### 1 Peter 3:15

*“Always be ready to give an answer to everyone who asks you for the reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect.”*

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### I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Those who seek to reach people who are skeptical of or opposed to the Christian faith will need to be ready to respond to objections with clear and reasoned answers. This course will equip you to address current common objections to the Christian faith with confidence by exploring biblical, theological, and philosophical arguments.

### II. A KINGSWOOD COURSE

*This is a Kingswood Course.* The name “Kingswood” is a reference to the Kingswood School that John Wesley and the early Methodists founded outside the city of Bristol in Southern England in 1748. The purpose of the Kingswood School was to educate the children of local coal miners in basic academics but also in biblical interpretation and Christian theology.

We are working to recapture that same educational spirit with our Kingswood Courses. We want these courses to challenge and equip our congregation by training them in the basic disciplines of biblical interpretation, Wesleyan theology, and practical divinity. Our prayer is that these courses will empower the members of our congregation to be grounded in the Word, alive in the Spirit, and sent on Mission.

### III. COURSE GOALS

By the end of this course, participants will:

1. Understand the core questions skeptics ask about Christianity.
2. Learn our church’s approach to truth, evangelism, and apologetics.
3. Grow in confidence to share your faith with grace and truth.
4. Practice real-world conversational skills for evangelism.
5. Develop cultural and biblical knowledge that builds confidence and boldness.

#### IV. HELPFUL ONLINE RESOURCES

- The Apologetics Hub – [www.apologeticshub.com](http://www.apologeticshub.com)
- The Ultimate List of Apologetics Terms for Beginners –  
<https://capturingchristianity.com/ultimate-list-apologetics-terms-for-beginners/>

#### V. HELPFUL PRINT RESOURCES

- Understanding Christian Apologetics: 5 Methods for Defending the Faith
  - *Edited by Timothy Paul Jones*
- The Gospel After Christendom: An Introduction to Cultural Apologetics
  - *Edited by Collin Hansen, Skyler R. Flowers, and Ivan Mesa*
- Apologetics for an Ever-Changing Culture: A Biblical and Culturally Relevant Approach to Talking about God
  - *Edited by Sean McDowell*

### COURSE SCHEDULE & SESSION TOPICS

#### PART 1 - Winter Session

**Jan 7** | What Is Apologetics? And Why Does It Matter Today?

**Jan 14** | "If Christ Has Not Been Raised": The Case for the Resurrection

**Jan 21** | Can We Trust the Bible? Reliability, Canon, and Authority

**Jan 28** | Is God Real? Philosophical and Scientific Arguments for God's Existence

**Feb 4** | Is God Good? The Problem of Evil and Suffering

**Feb 11** | Is Faith Reasonable? Faith, Doubt, and Evidence

#### PART 2 - Spring Session

**Apr 8** | Science and Faith: Are They at War?

**Apr 15** | Who Is Jesus? The Uniqueness and Exclusivity of Christ

**Apr 22** | Sexual Ethics and the Christian Vision of the Good Life

**Apr 29** | The Church's Failures: Hypocrisy, Abuse, and Historical Wrongs

**May 6** | Other Worldviews: Engaging Competing Faiths and Philosophies

**May 13** | Becoming Everyday Apologists: Practical Wisdom for Conversations

## Week 1: What Is Apologetics? Why It Matters Today

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### 1. What Is Christian Apologetics?

- *Apologia* (Greek): a reasoned defense that gives a reverent, thoughtful, and humble explanation of why you follow Jesus.
- Apologetics serves two audiences:
  - **Believers** — strengthening confidence in the truth.
  - **Skeptics/Seekers** — removing barriers and answering honest questions.

### 2. Biblical Foundations for Apologetics

- Jesus gave reasons for belief (*miracles, fulfilled prophecy, resurrection*).
- Paul reasoned and persuaded in the synagogues and public squares.
- Early Christians defended the faith before rulers and persecutors.
- Scripture portrays truth as both knowable and defensible.

### 3. Why Apologetics Matters Today

- Because Christianity is true.
- Because people are confused and hurting.
- Because Scripture calls believers to always be ready to respond.
  - **1 Peter 3:15** — “*Always be prepared to give a reason for the hope that is in you... with gentleness and respect.*”

### 4. The Heart of Christian Apologetics

- Our words should be **TRUTHFUL**.
- Our posture should be **HUMBLE**.
- Our tone should be **COMPASSIONATE**.
- Our goal should be **LOVE**.

## 5. What Apologetics Is NOT

- Not winning arguments or debates.
- Not answering questions nobody is asking.
- Not being aggressive or defensive.
- Not a replacement for evangelism or discipleship — but a companion to them.

## 6. Core Skills You Will Practice During This Course

- Explaining what you believe clearly and simply.
- Listening well and identifying real questions behind objections.
- Asking good questions (*a key to productive conversations*).
- Responding gently but confidently to difficult topics.
- Sharing your testimony as part of apologetics.
- Recognizing when to stop arguing and start praying.

## I. Memory Verse for the Week

**1 Peter 3:15** — “Always be ready to give an answer to everyone who asks you for the reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect.”

## II. PRACTICAL APPLICATION: