

APOLOGETICS 6 – PHILOSOPHY AND SCIENCE

INTRODUCTION

Apologetics - ἀπολογία apologia

The definition of Christian Apologetics is “the information that enables a believer to provide a defense for why a doctrine is believed.”

1 Peter 3:15 – But sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence.

2 Corinthians 10:5 – 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.

GOAL

1. To strengthen students so that they reach a confident, steadfast belief in God, Jesus, and the Scriptures so that they will never fall.
2. To prepare the student to give a proper response to common challenges.
 - a. The student may or may not actually give an answer.
 - b. The preparation is intended so that any challenge will not cause the student to doubt the truth of God, Jesus Christ.

PASCAL’S WAGER

Pascal’s Wager is named after the French philosopher and mathematician Blaise Pascal. In one of his publications, “Thoughts,” he proposed to those who were not convinced that God exists that they were taking a “wager” or a gamble that God does not exist.

The terminology has changed over time, but in the simplest terms possible, it is this: “If God does exist, then you lose everything, but if God does not exist, then I lose nothing.”

Pascal proposes to live as though God does exist.

But this is a false solution. One cannot live as though God exists with any eternal benefit. This is not belief. This does not convince anyone of anything. Scripture does not ask people to live as though He does exist or to live as though Jesus is Savior. Scripture announces the truth of the Good News of Jesus Christ, and those who are to avoid judgment and damnation must believe in Jesus, be convinced in Jesus Christ.

Pascal’s wager does not argue for anything, nor does it provide any evidence. But it does give a good incentive for the unbeliever to reconsider their position.

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THE PHILOSOPHICAL ARGUMENTS – IN CONCLUSION

Philosophical arguments deal with logic and syllogism (deductive reasoning) to argue for the existence of God. Some of these arguments are well-known; others are reserved for philosophical schools.

The three primary philosophical arguments, the Cosmological, Teleological, and Moral Arguments, are the best ones in my estimation. They are biblically sourced and logically sound. They also are the best for meeting this class's goals of preparing the student to be confident in God, Jesus Christ, and the Scriptures.

The Ontological and Presuppositional Arguments do not fit the needs of this class as they are primarily evangelical in nature, and I find them convoluted. The Presuppositional Argument is good in that it addresses the unbeliever's worldview, but the full argument is not biblical. The Ontological Argument is not sourced in Scripture and does not portray God in the same manner that the Bible does.

THE SCIENTIFIC ARGUMENTS

This is also known as evidentiary apologetics. The basis for this study is God's Word itself:

Psalm 19:1-4

Romans 1:18-21

If God's Word is true, then the world around us and what we observe will conform to its record.

This is where I think many theologians and even apologists make errors. They will say that even if what we observe in the world (scientifically) does not conform to the Bible, they say the Bible is still true.

Now, if what they mean by that is that the interpretation of the observations does not conform with the Bible and the Bible is still true, that is absolutely accurate.

However, if what we see around us in the world (observation) does not conform with what the Bible has said, then we must conclude that the Bible is false.

This is where the student needs first to define terms.

Observations – That which we can see, document, and is irrefutable

Interpretation – Conclusions based on observations plus criteria that the observer places on the observations.

If you find something buried in the ground, how do you determine how old it is? You make observations about the item in question, and then you place criteria upon those observations.

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One of the biggest battles in the scientific community is which criteria are used. What methods or tests a person uses will often determine the outcome.

Do not get fooled by evolutionary naturalist atheists when they give you interpretations disguised as observations.

Based on Scripture, creation itself, that is heaven and earth, will have His fingerprints.

AGENDA

Where do we begin?

Genesis 1:1 – In the beginning

What does this opening indicate? It means that there was a beginning. That is pretty simple. But can we know when the beginning occurred? What does the Bible indicate about when that was? And does that conform to the observations in creation?

From there, we will look at each day of creation, looking at them from an apologetic viewpoint. Not only will we be giving evidence for literal creation as opposed to evolution, but we will also refute theistic evolution and day-age theory.

Next, we will review the flood account and compare it to the geological and fossil record; we will discover that God's judgment explains what we see in the various strata of the earth and the fossils we find in them.

Afterward, we will look at the scientific claims of Scripture, demonstrating that God made clear references to the truth of our world thousands of years before it was discovered.