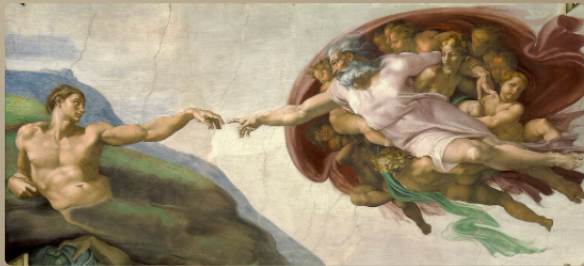




The Right Tool
Makes a Big
Difference in a
Battle!

What Is Theology?

Theology focuses on understanding what the Bible teaches about who God is, who He has made us to be, and how we should live in relationship to Him and each other.



What Is Apologetics?

Apologetics focuses on **defending** the teachings of Scripture and their implications.



What Is Apologetics?

Greek Root

Apologia — a formal defense or reasoned argument made in response to a charge or objection.

Biblical Basis

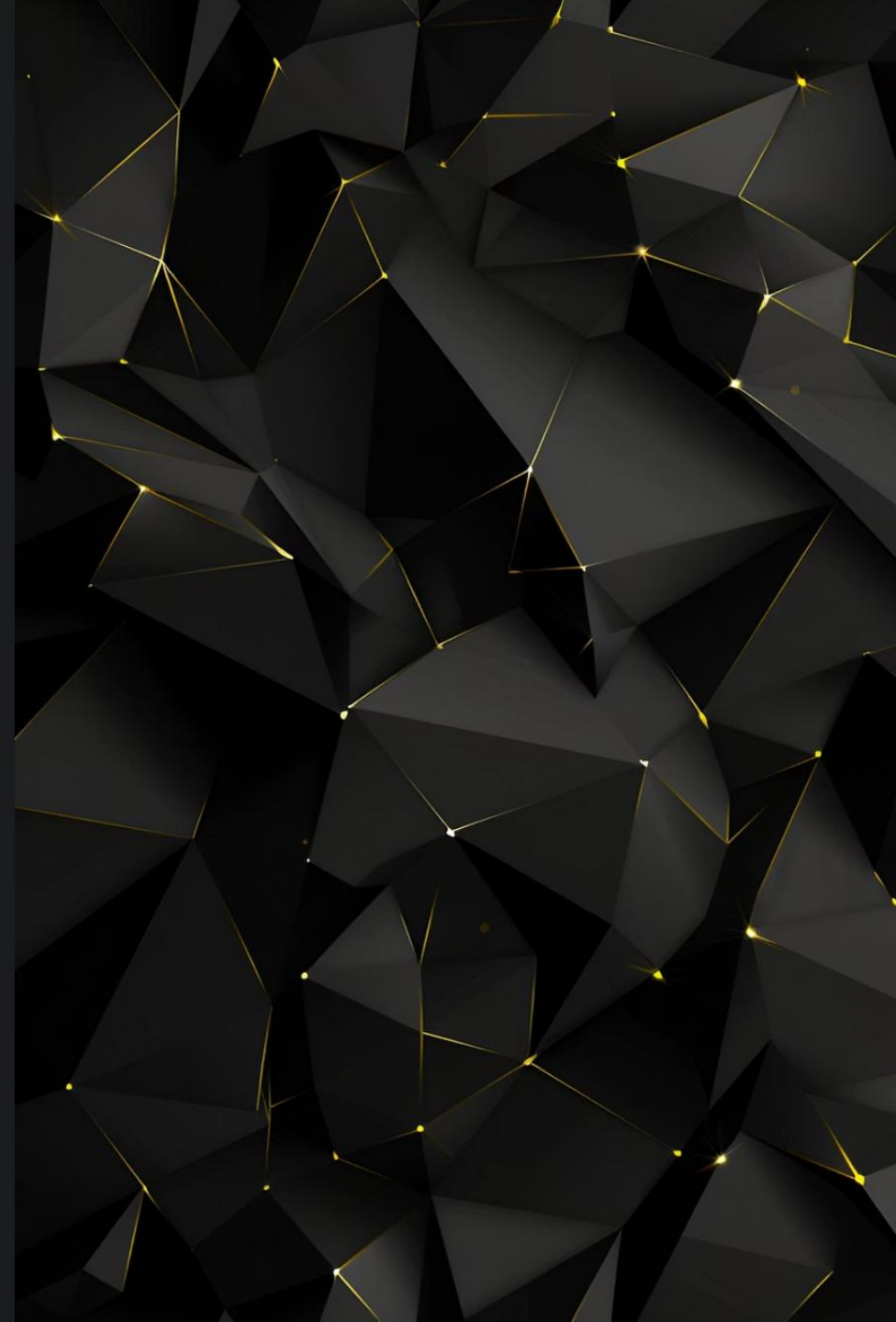
1 Peter 3:15 — "Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have."

Core Purpose

To defend, explain, and commend the truth of the Christian faith to both believers and unbelievers.

Apologetics for Unbelievers: Aiding Understanding

The proper role of apologetics toward unbelievers is to **aid the non-believer in understanding the Truth**. Paul modeled this in Athens.



Acts 17:22-32 (ESV)

Yet he is actually not far from each one of us, for “‘In him we live and move and have our being’; as even some of your own poets have said, “‘For we are indeed his offspring.’ Being then God’s offspring, we ought not to think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of man. The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.”

Removing Flawed Understandings

The Goal

Apologetics exposes the flawed understandings, biases, and demonic blinding that prevent non-believers from seeing Jesus and the Truth more clearly.

Acts 26:28–29

And Agrippa said to Paul, “In a short time would you persuade me to be a Christian?” And Paul said, “Whether short or long, I would to God that not only you but also all who hear me this day might become such as I am—except for these chains.”

Paul's reasoned defense moved even a skeptical king toward the threshold of belief.

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Tearing Down Strongholds

"For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ" — **2 Corinthians 10:4–5**

Apologetics skillfully uses our spiritual weapons God's Word and power. It tears down **demonic wisdom and strongholds** — These present as the intellectual, religious, and cultural fortresses that keep people captive.



Apologetics for Believers: Producing Conviction

The proper role of apologetics for the believer begins with **producing conviction and confidence** in their faith.

"In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, until the day when he was taken up, after he had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. He presented himself alive to them after his suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God." — **Acts 1:1–3**

Luke grounded Theophilus's faith in *infallible proofs* — evidence that builds unshakeable conviction.

Helping Head Connect to Heart

The Principle

When we understand our faith well enough to defend it, we are free to adore Christ, worship, and rest secure.

The Result

When the mind is satisfied, the heart is freed to worship, trust, and rest in God with clarity and confidence — not blind faith, but informed faith.



C.S. Lewis: Meditation on a Toolshed

"I was standing today in the dark toolshed. The sun was shining outside and through the crack at the top of the door there came a sunbeam... I was seeing the beam, not seeing things by it. Then I moved, so that the beam fell on my eyes. Instantly the whole previous picture vanished... Instead I saw, framed in the irregular cranny at the top of the door, green leaves moving on the branches of a tree outside and beyond that, 90 odd million miles away, the sun. **Looking along the beam, and looking at the beam are very different experiences.**"

— C.S. Lewis, *Meditation on a Toolshed*

Look *At* and *Along* the Beam

The light of God's revelation should be used to **reveal Reality and Truth as God perceives it** — not merely studied as an object, but looked through as a lens.

Looking AT the Beam

Analyzing faith from the outside — academic, critical, and helpful. (Useful but incomplete)

Looking ALONG the Beam

Experiencing reality through the lens of faith — seeing the world as God sees it. This is the goal of apologetics for the believer.

Apologetics Should Expose Satan's Deception

"For if someone comes and proclaims another Jesus than the one we proclaimed, or if you receive a different spirit from the one you received, or if you accept a different gospel from the one you accepted, you put up with it readily enough." (ESV)

— **2 Corinthians 11:4**

One of apologetics' most vital roles is exposing the enemy's counterfeits. Satan does not attack the faith with obvious lies — he uses subtle distortions of truth that are difficult to detect without a trained eye.



Satan's Attack #1: Corrupted Wisdom

The Strategy

Satan uses **corrupted logic** to corrupt or contradict the Truth — "Did God say?" or "God is wrong."

Job 4:12–19

Eliphaz presents a vision that subtly undermines God's justice and Job's integrity — a sophisticated theological argument that sounds wise but leads away from truth. Satan's logic often wears the clothing of reason.

Job 4:12–19

“Now a word was brought to me stealthily; my ear received the whisper of it. Amid thoughts from visions of the night, when deep sleep falls on men, dread came upon me, and trembling, which made all my bones shake. A spirit glided past my face; the hair of my flesh stood up. It stood still, but I could not discern its appearance. A form was before my eyes; there was silence, then I heard a voice: ‘Can mortal man be in the right before God? Can a man be pure before his Maker? Even in his servants he puts no trust, and his angels he charges with error; how much more those who dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust, who are crushed like the moth.’”

Satan's Attack #2: Corrupted Desires

The Strategy

Satan uses **corrupted desires** to devalue the truth — "Wouldn't this give you what you really want and help you be who you really are?"

1 John 2:16

The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life are not from the Father but from the world. Satan appeals to our deepest longings and redirects them away from God — making sin feel like fulfillment.

1 John 2:16 (ESV)

"For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world."

Satan's Attack #3: Corrupted Ideals

The Strategy

Satan uses **corrupted ideals** to co-opt the Truth — "Wouldn't this outcome or approach be better than what God has set up?"

Genesis 3:1

"Has God indeed said...?" Satan doesn't deny God outright — he reframes God's commands as inferior, suggesting a better path exists outside of obedience. He hijacks our sense of justice and progress to lead us astray.

Genesis 3:1 (ESV)

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?" And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'" But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

Satan's Attack #4: Corrupted Community

The Strategy

Satan uses **others to confirm his lies** — he creates counterfeit communities that normalize sin and validate deception as enlightenment.

Romans 1:26–32

Paul describes a community that not only practices what God forbids, but *approves* of those who do. Counterfeit community provides social proof for rebellion — making error feel like belonging and truth feel like bigotry.

Romans 1:28–32 (ESV)

"And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done. They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless. Though they know God's righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, **they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them.**"

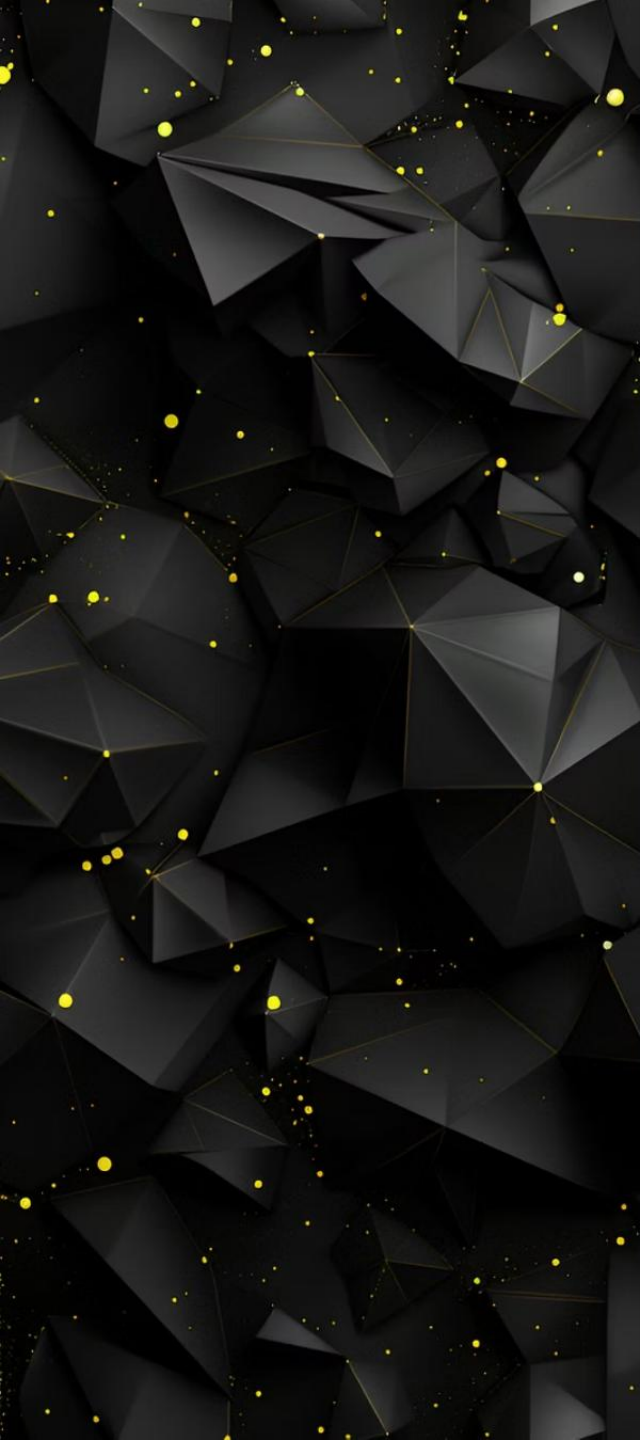
Satan's Attacks

Corrupted Wisdom

Corrupted Desires

Corrupted Ideal

Corrupted Community



What Should Apologetics Do for God's People?

Apologetics serves the church in vital ways —
producing conviction, clarifying truth, confirming truth,
contending for truth, informing ministry, and
contextualizing the gospel without compromising it.

Apologetics Should Produce Strength

Apologetics builds spiritual and intellectual strength — you become able to support yourself and then others in their faith.



Apologetics Should Confirm Truth

Whether we are teaching our children, equipping the congregation, speaking truth to our friends, or proclaiming truth to non-Christians - we must confirm the truth, not apologize for it.





Apologetics Should Clarify Truth

Apologetics must **explain what truth means** and how it has been distorted — not just assert that truth exists.



Apologetics Should Contend for Truth

Answer Objections

Apologetics must respond to the challenges, doubts, and attacks leveled against the Christian faith with reasoned, biblical answers.

Put Forth Arguments

Beyond defense, apologetics must *advance* — making positive arguments for the accuracy and importance of Christian truth to our lives.

Jude 3

"Earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."

Apologetics Should Inform Ministry — Not Control It

Inform

Apologetics can help shape how we preach, teach, counsel, and evangelize. This can help us communicate more effectively.

Not Control

When apologetics controls ministry it determines the content, focus, methodology, and approach. These decisions should be controlled by what God has said.

Contextualize Truth — Not Compromise It

Contextualization

Apologetics should translate truth into language and frameworks that connect with the culture — meeting people where they are, as Paul did in Athens.

The Danger

Contextualization becomes compromise when the *content* of truth is altered to avoid offense or gain acceptance. The package may change; the message must not.

Apologetics Should
Never Be the Final
Reason We Believe.

The Danger of Apologetics

"One last word. I have found that nothing is more dangerous to one's own faith than the work of an apologist." — **C.S. Lewis**, *Christian Apologetics*

Christian apologetics must continually return to **God as the source and reason for our faith** — or it can become the path to deconstruction.

The Apologist's Evening Prayer

By C.S. Lewis

"From all my lame defeats and oh! much more
From all the victories that I seemed to score;
From cleverness shot forth on Thy behalf
At which, while angels weep, the audience laugh;
From all my proofs of Thy divinity,
Thou, who wouldst give no sign, deliver me.
Thoughts are but coins. Let me not trust, instead
Of Thee, their thin-worn image of Thy head.
From all my thoughts, even from my thoughts of Thee,
O thou fair Silence, fall, and set me free.
Lord of the narrow gate and the needle's eye,
Take from me all my trumpery lest I die."

Three Key Issues in Apologetics

1

Popular vs. Academic

Apologetics ranges from accessible, street-level conversations to rigorous academic philosophy. Both have their place and audience.

2

Methodology

Classical
Evidential
Cumulative Case
Presuppositional
Reformed Epistemology
Note: each approach has distinct strengths and assumptions.

3

Foundations

What does a given apologist defend as Christian Truth? The foundation shapes everything — methodology, tone, and conclusions.

Where Should I Go
for Quality Apologetic
Material?

Ask the Holy Spirit to teach
you as you seek to know God
and defend the Truth of God's
Word.



Standard Apologetics

For a broad, reliable foundation in Christian apologetics, these authors cover the core arguments for the faith across theology, philosophy, and evidence:



Norman Geisler

Comprehensive classical apologetics and systematic theology.



Wayne Grudem

Calvinist systematic theology with apologetic depth and biblical grounding.



Frank Turek

Accessible, engaging arguments for the existence of God and truth of Christianity.



William Lane Craig & C.S. Lewis

Philosophical rigor and literary brilliance — essential reading for every apologist.

Methodology & Ancient Languages

Tactics — Greg Koukl

A practical guide to navigating conversations about faith with skill and grace. Essential for real-world apologetic dialogue.

Ancient Languages — Wess Huff

Engaging scholarship on the biblical languages and their role in understanding and defending Scripture.

Ancient Languages — Bruce Metzger

Authoritative New Testament textual scholarship — foundational for defending the reliability of the biblical text.



The Resurrection

Gary Habermas

The leading scholar on the historical evidence for the resurrection — his minimal facts argument is essential.

N.T. Wright

The Resurrection of the Son of God — a monumental historical and theological defense.

Michael Licona

Rigorous historical methodology applied to the resurrection accounts.

Historicity of Scripture

Craig Blomberg

A leading evangelical scholar on the historical reliability of the Gospels. His work *The Historical Reliability of the Gospels* is a standard reference for defending the accuracy of the New Testament accounts.

Merrill Unger

A foundational resource in biblical archaeology and Old Testament scholarship — demonstrating how archaeology consistently supports the historical claims of Scripture.

Classical Philosophical Defense of Christianity



Norman Geisler

Thomistic philosophy applied to Christian apologetics — rigorous arguments for God's existence and the truth of Christianity.



William Lane Craig

World-class philosophical and cosmological arguments — the Kalam Cosmological Argument and more.



J. Gresham Machen

A foundational defender of orthodox Christianity against modernism — historically vital and still deeply relevant.

Defending Against Liberal & Progressive Theology

J. Gresham Machen

His landmark work *Christianity and Liberalism* (1923) remains the definitive response to theological liberalism — arguing that liberal Christianity is not Christianity at all, but a different religion.

Roger Olson

A careful evangelical theologian who engages progressive and liberal theology with nuance — helping believers understand where the boundaries of orthodoxy lie and why they matter.

Cultural Apologetics

Michael Licona

Engages contemporary cultural challenges to the Christian faith with historical rigor and pastoral sensitivity.

Greg Bahnsen

A presuppositional apologist who challenges the cultural and philosophical assumptions underlying secular worldviews — demonstrating that only the Christian worldview provides a coherent foundation for knowledge and ethics.

