

Series: Apology — Giving a Defense for the Faith

Title: Part 10 — Making an Apology

Text: Selected Passages

Date: August 11, 2024

“I am not sure that apologetics has not been the curse of evangelicalism for the last twenty or thirty years.” **Martyn Lloyd-Jones**

“In this struggle [against modernism] Apologetics have advanced us not one single step.”
Abraham Kuyper

“We should be embarrassed by what ‘apologetics’ has sometimes come to look like.” **Joshua Chatraw**

To close our study, I want us to consider the *how* of apologetics. So far, we have looked mostly at the *why* and the *what* of giving a defense for the faith. In what follows, I want to offer some biblical suggestions for giving a response to opponents of the faith...

1. LISTENING

Proverbs _____

A. Listen to _____.

James _____

“As we consider how best physically to present ourselves to the non-Christian, it is valuable to contemplate how we prefer others to present themselves to us. There is little more annoying than attempting to express one’s emotionally-laden beliefs to someone who is staring blankly into space. When eye contact is maintained, we communicate that what the others are expressing is valuable, simply because they are articulating their own heartfelt experience.”

J.S. Brent & D.E. Chismar

“In my opinion, listening is the most important and least appreciated skill in apologetics...most people interested in apologetics love to hear themselves talk. Moreover, they are also used to being the smartest people in the room (or at least they think they are)... Listening to people is a function of our respect for them.” **Voddie Baucham**

B. Listen to _____.

“Too often, the apologist answers questions the unbeliever is not asking, and portrays God as saving what the individual does not want. Through empathic dialogue, the apologist enables the non-Christian to discover the things he or she values and seeks; the apologist is then in a position to demonstrate how Christianity best provides a basis for these things.” **J.S. Brent & D.E. Chismar**

2. QUESTIONING

Matthew _____

Mark _____

Questioning gives people an opportunity to evaluate their own views and to consider the truth of Christ.

“Many people are living with values and philosophies absorbed from culture without examination. Questioning promotes a chance for honest evaluation instead of the usual entrenchment of viewpoints.” **W.E. Brown**

3. REPLYING

Colossians _____

Proverbs _____

Approach apologetics like you would tools in a toolbox. Apply the right argument with wisdom as you would choose the right tool for a repair.

“...we should approach evangelism with wisdom. This means that we become people who incarnate the gospel and speak of it freely because our hearts and minds have been captivated by it. Becoming people of wisdom and compassion is prerequisite for any evangelistic technique.” **Randy Newman**

4. GROWING

2 Peter _____

“Men are deceived in this, if they think their conversion is finished merely at first; you must be in a way of conversion to God all the days of your life.” **Jeremiah Burroughs**

5. TRUSTING

Matthew _____

“Christ’s power will make the inadequate adequate. Christ’s power is perfected in our weakness. Christ’s ‘all authority’ guarantees our success. Even the gates of hell, those gates which guard the citadel of the evil one, cannot stand against the power of Christ. His church shall batter down the fortresses of Lucifer.” **Terry Johnston**

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why is listening important in apologetics? What are some of the reasons that we fail to listen well at times?
2. Why are questions effective when offering a defense of the faith? Are there questions you could use when conversing with an atheist, and agnostic, a Muslim, or someone else of a different worldview or religion? Have you discovered the power of questions in another domain of life — work, family, marriage, friendships, or another relationship?

3. What do you think of the explanation of wisdom that was provided in this study? How can one grow in wisdom?
4. Why is personal growth important for the apologist? Have you grown in your understanding of the faith lately? Are there questions you can answer concerning Christianity now that you were unable to answer in previous years?
5. How does it make you feel to know that it is not your responsibility to convince anyone or change anyone? Is it encouraging to know that it is Christ's "authority" that brings power to our apologetical defenses?