



DEFENDING THE FAITH

APOLOGETICS

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Apologetics according to the dictionary is the theology concerned with the defense of Christianity. It is a Greek word that means speaking in defense of something. However, there is a misunderstanding of this word among many Christians. The problem with apologetics is that it is not a biblical term, however, there are many indications that a defense of the faith is important. In Jude 1:3 he states, "Beloved when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that you should **earnestly contend for the faith** which was once delivered unto the saints". Apologetics is many times confused with an apology (which means to regret, have remorse, or feel sorrowful) for an action. But, the use of this word within the Christian community is to have an answer to those who have a question concerning your hope in Christianity. For many Christians, it is a verbal defense of Jesus to those who are unbelievers (antichrists). The purpose then is to persuade them to change their minds and the direction of their life. In other words, to become followers of Jesus. This understanding comes from the teaching that Christians are soul winners for the Lord. However, to be an apologist within Christian theology is to reason with the unlearned or unbeliever. The primary emphasis is to bring them to an understanding of the natures of good and evil. Then the listener must choose based on their relationship with God at that moment. The choice at that moment is to pick between Christ or the antichrist, day or night, light or darkness, good or evil, etc.

Apologetics is centered around two basic worldviews. Being that these views are in the spiritual realm, we need to view them from that position. These views are called the "secular world view and the Biblical world view. The dictionary meaning of having a worldview is, "The beliefs, values, and behaviors of a culture stem directly from its worldview." ... A person's worldview is the overall perspective from which he or she views and interprets the world. It can also include the beliefs about life and the universe held by a group." The bottom line is that a worldview is an individual's point of view concerning how they see the various aspects of the functioning of society.

The secular worldview is identified as "secularism". To have a secularist worldview means, "the separation of religion from political, economic, social and cultural aspects of life, religion is treated as a purely personal matter. It emphasized the dissociation of the state from religion and full freedom to all religions and tolerance of all religions. As we can see, a secular worldview is void of any religious belief. However, the fact that it is called "in its true form" secularism, indicates that it has all the components of religion. In today's society, there has been a shift in the understanding of secularism. Now, secularism is at war with religion on a very aggressive level. This is true with the entering of intersectionality and critical race theories into the religious realm. This is primarily noted in the Christian movements. We find that major Christian dominations are giving over to these theories in the area of theology. Many are adopting some of the following beliefs into their teachings.

- The Gospel of Permissive Grace
- The Gospel of Social Justice
- The Gospel of New Age Spirituality

Many other belief systems are considered to be false gospels that have crept into mainstream Christian beliefs.

I understand that a closer look at these gospels is important. Therefore, let us start with:

The Gospel of Permissive Grace:

Grace has been defined by many as being “unmerited favor from God”. It is given to those by God who did not deserve it. Our understanding of grace comes from Ephesians 2:8 which states, “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God”. Many in the Churches use the phrase, “the grace and love of God are “unconditional and they are freely given to each of us”. Now the main question here is whether grace is conditional or unconditional, is it unmerited or not? Now, if we take a closer look we will see that grace comes through faith and faith comes by hearing the word of God. The word of God is Jesus. Faith is the substance that is granted by God on his just, Habakkuk 2:4. Paul reaffirms this in Romans. 1:17 when he writes, “For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith”. Therefore, God’s grace is granted to those who he deems justified by faith. Without faith, it is impossible to please God, Hebrews 11:6. Now, you can not have the grace of God without having faith in God.

The Gospel of Social Justice

Social Justice is the view that everyone deserves equal economic, political, and social rights and opportunities. Social justice activists' goals are to open the doors of access and opportunity for everyone, particularly those in greatest need.” Within the concept of social justice lays a strong need to bring society up to a level of equality that all are equal in their sight. Social justice, based on its components is virtually impossible to obtain. Intersectionality is based on the social justice components that lend themselves to the need of an oppressor and an oppressed class of individuals to sustain itself. Therefore, social justice cannot be obtained if there is an elimination of one of its intersectionality elements.

The Gospel of New Age Spirituality

The new age movement is considered by many of its members as a silver bullet against racism, poverty, sickness, hunger, and war. They believe that all we need to do is get along and all problems will disappear. Their understanding is that the accomplishment of this environment is grounded in a heightened spiritual consciousness. A consciousness that can be achieved via reincarnations, astrology, psychics, and the presence of spiritual energy in physical objects. They tend to be worshipers of nature, rather than God. We find that many young people today are looking for different ways to meet their spiritual needs. Many new-age leaders teach that salvation is not only found in Christianity but in many other forms of religious practices in combination. The movement closely resembles the charismatic movement. These are but only three movements that have or attempting to penetrate the mainstream Christian denominations. The bible in the old and new Testaments tells us to beware.

CHRISTIANITY

Christianity is the belief that Jesus Christ is the Only-begotten Son of God who came to earth to save his people from their sins (Matthew 1:21). The sins that they were committing were

based on unbelief. This is explained in Mark 6:4-6, "But Jesus, said unto them, A prophet is not without honor, but in his own country, and among his kin, and in his own house. And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folks, and healed them. And he marveled because of their unbelief. And he went round about the villages, teaching". These sins were in connection to the sin of disobedience that came upon humanity from the actions of Adam and the Woman in the garden. The understanding that that action put a curse on humanity that separated man from the love of God. The belief is that God sent His Son over 4000 years later (after Adam and Eve left the garden) to correct the sin problem by sacrificing himself as a sin offering. An offering that was the payment to God for him to destroy the works of evil on humanity. Further, it is the belief that those who accept Him (Jesus) as God must persuade others of His identity and to become believers also. The common doctrine of this belief is Christology which is the nature, person, and deeds of Jesus, The Christ. All of these are explained in the inerrant Word of God, the Bible. Therefore, to summarize Christianity there are five (5) basic essential beliefs:

1. The Bible is God's Word
2. God is Three in One (multiplex $1 \times 1 \times 1 = 1$)
3. Jesus is fully God
4. We are saved by Faith
5. There's life after death in Christ

There are many other doctrines within our Christian understanding. However, any deviation from the essential teaching leads to heresy.

ANTI-CHRISTIANITY

Within the area of anti-Christianity, there are two schools of understanding. There is the understanding that Jesus is not God and the other is that he is the only begotten Son of God. Regardless of which of these schools an individual follows, they are both adversaries of who Jesus is. Several scriptures warn us about those who are antichrists. One of the best warnings comes from 1st John 2:22 where we are told, "Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is **antichrist**, that denieth the Father and the Son". The key phrase here is, "Jesus is the Christ". The important thing here is the word "Christ" and the Hebrew meaning attached to that title (Strong Concordance G5547). Antichrists deal (knowingly or unknowingly) in deception and cunningness and they are false prophets who make merchandise of Christians (2nd Peter 2:1-3). The merchandise they are selling is unbelief that comes from unrighteousness which leads to sin and death (separation from God). Anti-Christ doctrine hinges on the opposite of Christianity.

1. There is an additional modern book that can be used in conjunction with the Bible
2. There is only one God with no son equal to Him
3. Jesus is either not God or a lesser god
4. Man is saved by works
5. Life after death does not exist.

Apologetics: Christianity vs Christianity

Within the doctrine of Christianity, the central figure is Jesus. His nature, deeds, and actions

of him are essential to what we believe about him. Just missing one aspect of him will lead you down a path of no return. The path is called "reprobate". This understanding brings us to the question of "Who is Jesus"? This question is the glue that holds everything together. Currently, in Christianity, there are many views as to who Jesus is and what he represents. Now let us understand, that the scriptures tell us that the wheat and tare must grow up together until the heaviest. We know that the wheat knows Jesus is God in the flesh and that he knows them because they follow his voice. He is not a god, nor the brother of Satan but God Almighty, Jehovah our savior. Let's take a look at some of those that declare to Christians but have a different view of who he is Jesus:

Jehovah's Witnesses: The religious group came on the scene in the late 1800s. At their conception, their primary belief stemmed from disagreements with mainstream Christian beliefs. They build their religion around six basic principles. They are the immortality of the soul, hellfire, predestination, the fleshly return of Jesus Christ, the Trinity, and the burning up of the world. These are some of the most controversial beliefs of the Christian community. However, the success of this group was primarily based on their ability to publish religious journals that influence many in their understanding of the Scriptures. The success of this action was based on the inactions of many Christian dominations on these issues. Now, the most controversial belief that they came up with is that Jesus will not return in the flesh. Therefore their understanding is that he is a God who is lesser than Jehovah God. Within their belief, Jesus is Jehovah's only son who was created to redeem humanity from their sins. He accomplished this by becoming a sacrifice that paid the sin ransom. The primary belief of Jesus by Christians must be firmly on the fact that Jesus is God in the flesh, the only one and only true God. Failure to believe this is to be considered an unbeliever, a heretic.