

Defending and Building Your Faith Christian Apologetics – Worksheet 07

Week 7 – Apologetics Basics

This week we will learn some basics about _____. As stated in the first lesson of this series, don't be scared by the word apologetics.

The word "apologetics" comes from the Greek word "apologia," pronounced, "ap-ol-og-ee'-ah." It means, "a _____." It is used eight times in the New Testament: Acts 22:1; 25:16; 1 Cor. 9:3; 2 Cor. 7:11; Phil. 1:7,17; 2 Tim. 4:16, and 1 Pet. 3:15. But it is the last verse that is most commonly associated with Christian apologetics. ^{SMJ1}

*But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always **to give an answer** to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear: (1 Peter 3:15) [emphasis added to indicate use of the Greek word for apologetics]*

Christian apologetics is the branch of theology that deals with _____ any and all critics who oppose or question the validity of Christianity. It can include studying such subjects as biblical manuscript transmission, philosophy, biology, mathematics, evolution, logic, history, etc. But it can also consist of simply giving an _____ to a question about Jesus or a Bible passage. The latter case is by far the most common and you don't have to read a ton of books to do that. ^{SMJ1}

Apologetics can be _____ and _____. Philippians 1:7 gives us instruction on the defensive side. "Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace." 2 Corinthians 10:5 gives us instruction on the aggressive side, "Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." The apologist can and should _____ his reasons for believing (1 Pet. 3:15). But, he can also go on the attack. He can seek out those who oppose Christianity (2 Cor. 10:5). Of course, he should be prepared to do this before hand with gentleness. ^{SMJ1}

Some areas of debate within Christian apologetics deal with the use and relationship of evidence, reason, philosophy, presuppositions, etc. ... Is reason alone sufficient to prove God's existence or Christianity's truth? How much should reason and evidence be used in light of the Scriptures teaching that it is God who opens the mind to understand? What part does prayer, using the Bible, and the sinful nature of the unbeliever play in witnessing? How do these factors interrelate to bring an unbeliever to faith? ^{SMJ1}

Jesus chose one highly educated religious person as an apostle. That was Paul. The rest were fishermen, a tax collector, a doctor, etc. They were regular people who were available and willing to be used by the Lord. They were filled with the Spirit of God and they were used as vessels of His righteousness. God uses all things for His glory. So, we do apologetics by faith, in obedience to His

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command, and **we expect that God will be glorified**. As far as which approach is best, I recommend you pray, trust God, and give the best answer you can. Let the Holy Spirit guide you. As you can see that different apologetic approaches were used in scripture depending on the situation, you too will adapt to the issue at hand. ^{SMJ1}

The Lord has called every Christian to be ready to make a defense of his faith. That means **you are called** to give reasonable answers to questions regarding Christianity. This does not mean that you must have a Ph.D or that you have to go to seminary. But it does mean that you should be willing to at least give an answer for your beliefs. If you find you cannot, then prayerfully talk to God about it and start studying. ^{SMJ1}

We'll now take a closer look at the following apologetics topics.

- Types of Apologetics
- Logic in Apologetics
- Scripture Memorization

Types of Apologetics

Apologetics can basically be separated into three different basic categories including _____, _____, or _____. We'll proceed by taking briefly examining each of these apologetic categories, beginning with evidential apologetics.

Evidential Apologetics

Evidential apologetics is that style of Christian defense that stresses the _____ found in the Bible, particularly Christ's resurrection, as an evidence for the existence of God and the validity of Christ and His words. It also uses historical evidences to support the veracity of the biblical accounts. In this, it is very similar to Classical Apologetics which stresses reason in its approach to evidences. Basically, evidential apologetics stresses evidence such as miracles, fulfilled prophecies, etc. and uses reason to support them. ^{SMJ1} Some of the evidence used for Christianity in this type of apologetics includes items such as:

- Jesus' resurrection
- The biblical manuscripts
- Fulfilled prophecy
- Miracles

In fact, Jesus Himself defended His resurrection with the use of evidence.

Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. (John 20:27)

Generally, evidential apologetics stresses data that supports the _____ evidences of the biblical accounts thereby authenticating the Bible and the claims and deeds of Jesus. ^{SMJ1}

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The resurrection of Christ is perhaps the most important _____ regarding Christianity in the Bible. It is strong evidence and you should be familiar with the arguments supporting it. If the resurrection of Christ is valid, then Christianity is true. If Jesus did not arise from the dead, then Christianity is false. ^{SMJ1}

You'll find in your discussions with critics of the Bible that they will reject the resurrection of Christ. But what have they to offer in place of the accounts? You see, if they want to deny that Christ rose from the dead, then they need to come up with a replacement explanation that can incorporate the actions and words of the disciples. In other words, the disciples claimed that Christ rose from the dead and they based their lives, their words, and their deeds on that resurrection event. It is not simply that they are claiming to believe in some abstract concept like reincarnation or karma. Instead, they taught that Jesus rose from the dead. It is the _____ of Christ that motivated them to do and say what they did. What other explanation best accounts for their actions? What other explanation is there that can account for the disciples willingness to die, to suffer persecution, hardship, rejection of their religious community, and to become extremely evangelical? These are the same people who taught honesty, integrity, truthfulness, self-sacrifice, and love. If Jesus did not arise from the dead, then the disciples are liars and perpetuated that lie while they were going around telling people to be honest, truthful, loving, etc. it just doesn't make sense... unless Jesus actually rose from the dead. ^{SMJ1}

The evidence is there and it is a powerful argument for the resurrection. Don't let the critics say it didn't happen. If they want to deny the resurrection, then let them offer a better explanation for the motivation and actions of the disciples throughout the New Testament history. If they cannot, then the resurrection of Christ is the best explanation. ^{SMJ1}

Classical Apologetics

Classical apologetics focus on using _____ combined with evidences. Paul reasoned with the Jews in the temple: ^{SMJ1}

Therefore disputed he in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met with him. (Acts 17:17)

The Greek word for "disputed" in this verse is *dialegomai* and can also be rendered as "_____." Thayer's defines it to mean "to think different things with one's self, mingle thought with thought; to ponder, revolve in mind; to converse, discourse with one, argue, discuss." When you reason with someone, you use logic.

Classical Apologetics is that style of Christian defense that stresses rational arguments for the existence of God and uses evidence to substantiate biblical claims and miracles. It is quite similar to evidential apologetics and appeals to human reason and evidence. Early Classical Apologists include Augustine, Anselm, and Thomas Aquinas. Contemporary classical apologists are Norman Geisler, William Craig, and J. P. Moreland. ^{SMJ1}

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Some of the arguments relied upon for proofs of God's existence are the _____ argument and the _____ argument. The cosmological argument attempts to prove God exists by stating that there has to be an uncaused cause of all things. That uncaused cause is God. The teleological argument uses the analogy of design; that is, the universe and life exhibit marks of design. Therefore, there must be a Designer. Other times, strict evidence is used to establish Christianity's validity. Of course, both aspects are also combined in classical apologetics. ^{SMJ1}

No argument is without strengths and weaknesses and all classical apologetic approaches have been tackled by critics. But, the critics are not left unanswered and Christians have, in turn, refuted their refutations. This back and forth process of point-counter-point is going to continue until Jesus returns. Nevertheless, God commands that we do our best to defend the faith and classical apologetics is one of the means to do that. ^{SMJ1}

Presuppositional Apologetics

Presuppositional apologetics deals with the _____ of those who oppose Christianity because presuppositions effect how a person _____ evidence. This approach is very useful when dealing with atheists as you'll find out later. Jesus used a presuppositional approach when He spoke to the woman at the well.

Our fathers worshiped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. (John 4:20-21)

This form of Christian apologetics deals with presuppositions. A Christian presuppositionalist presupposes God's _____ and argues from that perspective to show the validity of Christian theism. This position also presupposes the truth of the Christian _____ and relies on the validity and power of the _____ to change lives (Rom. 1:16). From the scriptures we see that the unbeliever is sinful in his mind (Rom. 1:18-32) and unable to understand spiritual things (1 Cor. 2:14). **This means that no matter how convincing the evidence or good the logic, an unbeliever cannot come to the faith because his fallen nature will distort how he perceives the truth. The only thing that can ultimately change him is regeneration.** To this end, the presuppositionalist seeks to change a person's presuppositions to be in conformity with biblical revelation in preparation for the work of the Holy Spirit. ^{SMJ1}

A person's presuppositions are extremely important when discussing God and the validity of Christianity. Always ask diagnostic _____ to find out where a person is philosophically and presuppositionally to better discuss Christianity. This is a very important point to focus on because one's presuppositions will govern how one interprets facts. ^{SMJ1} [*heavily modified from the source*]

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Many atheists lack _____ due to their presupposition that God does not exist. They generally try to demand some sort of evidence or proof but when it is provided they declare it to be invalid. To counter this one must continue to focus on the problem of the atheist's presuppositional base. More about this will be covered in the lesson on atheists. ^{SMJ1} [*heavily modified from the source*]

Logic in Apologetics

Logic is very important in apologetics. To defend the faith, the Christian must use truth, facts, and reason appropriately and _____. This is something Paul did in Acts 17:17 when he reasoned with the Jews. The Christian should **listen to objections** and make cogent and rational comments in direct response to the issues raised. ^{SMJ1}

Logic is simply another tool in the arsenal of Christian apologetics. Logic is a system of reasoning. It is the principles of proper thinking used to arrive at correct conclusions. Of course, some people are better at thinking logically than others and there is no guarantee that using logic to the best of one's ability will bring conversion of anyone. **After all, logic is not what saves a person. Jesus does that and we are justified by faith (Rom. 5:1), not by logic.** But, we are told to give a defense for the faith and this involves truthful presentations wedded with _____ arguments. ^{SMJ1}

Therefore, the proper use of logic in apologetics is to remove intellectual barriers that _____ a person from *receiving* Jesus as Savior. Logic is not to be looked at as the answer to every problem facing Christianity or every objection raised. Logic has its limits. It cannot guarantee wisdom. It cannot prove or disprove inspiration or love. **It cannot replace the intuition gained through experience, the prompting of the Holy Spirit, nor the clear truth of God's word.** Nevertheless, logic is still very valuable and can be quite powerfully used by people both the saved and unsaved. ^{SMJ1}

Logic Basics

Some very useful basic laws of logic include the law of non-contradiction, law of identity and the law of excluded middle which are explained below.

The law of non-contradiction

The law of non-contradiction states that "a" cannot be both "a" and not "a" at the same time. In other words, you cannot have something be true and not true at the same time. If I stated that yesterday I went to the grocery store and then later on I said that yesterday I did not go to the grocery store, you would be right in pointing out the contradiction. This is because to say that I have gone to the grocery store and not gone to the grocery store on the same day is a logical impossibility. That is, both statements cannot be true at the same time since each one excludes the other from being true. Most people easily point out _____ . This is because the law of non-contradiction is a valid law of logic. ^{SMJ1}

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This has application when dealing with alleged biblical contradictions. Oftentimes critics will say that the Bible has contradictions. But in order to determine if that is true or not, you must know what a contradiction is (Law of Identity discussed next). **A contradiction occurs when one statement makes another statement impossible.** Therefore, for example, it is not a contradiction to say that at the resurrection tomb one Gospel says one angel appeared and another says the two appeared. Logically, if two were there, then one was there, also. This is not a contradiction. However, if one of the accounts stated that only one appeared at the tomb and another gospel stated that two appeared, then that would be a contradiction since to say that only one appeared makes a statement that two appeared false. ^{SMJ1}

The law of identity

The law of identity states that something is what it is: "a" is equal to "a". This is important because with the law of identity we are able to identify what things are, i.e., the definition of the term "contradiction." When we identify something, label it, and/or describe it we can then more accurately work with it in a discussion. This helps to avoid confusion later on and helps to prevent such things as _____. Equivocation is the _____ of a term in a conversation. An example of this often occurs is in the use of the term "evolution." Evolution is defined as change in an organism over a period of generations. This might mean that in a single species of moth, for example, that the population turns from white to dark due to some environmental changes. If a person were to admit that this happens, then he is admitting in a very small sense to evolution, since evolution means change. An evolutionist could then say, "See, you believe an evolution." But we know that the evolutionist is not narrowing his definition to very slight changes in an organism (which does occur). He means the broad sense of evolution where one species changes to another -- which is not what the original sense of the word meant. Therefore, equivocation is the change of the meaning of a term or terms in a discussion. The law of identity helps prevent this error by a first qualifying, or identifying, what a term or concept means. The more something is identified, the less the problem of equivocation can occur. ^{SMJ1}

The law of excluded middle

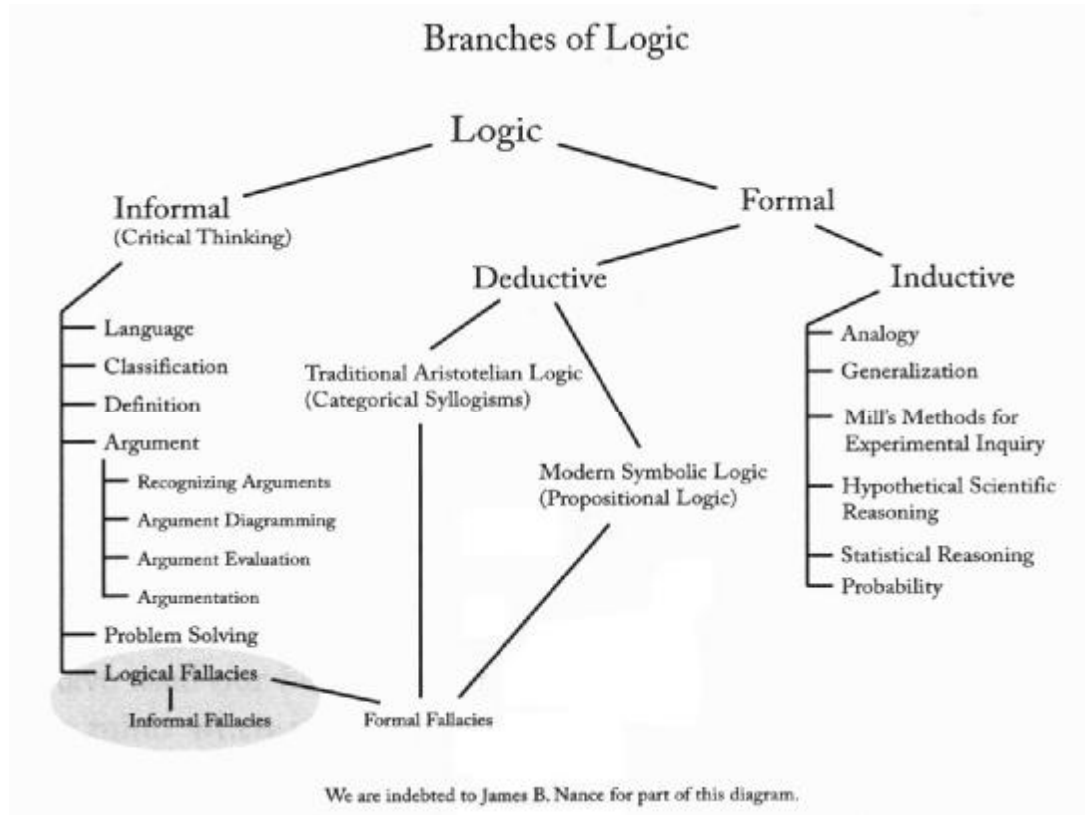
The law of excluded middle means that every statement is either _____ or _____, that there is no middle position. If I state that I have a set of car keys in my pocket, it is either true or false that I have a set of car keys in my pocket. It is either true or false that I am human. It is either true or false that the Bible is the word of God. It is either true or false that God exists, etc. The law of excluded middle is important when discussing biblical truths. For example, we are either justified by faith (Rom. 5:1) or we are not. All world religions and Bible based non-Christian cults state that we are made right before God by faith in God and by something that we do. If we are justified by faith, then it is either true or false that we are justified by faith. It would exclude the possibility of being justified by faith and something we do since to say we are justified, in part, by something we do is to deny justification by faith. Therefore, the law of excluded middle would

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state that these false religious systems teach that we are not justified by faith since they teach we are justified by faith and works. ^{SMJ1}

Logical Fallacies

The logical fallacies listed in this section have been provided to help you to be able to identify them as they occur in your discussions with others. These are very important because they help you to _____ your arguments for Christianity while you demonstrate the problems in the critic's thinking process. Everything we have and will cover about logic relates only to practical logic. The book named "The Fallacy Detective" (by Nathaniel and Hans Bluedorn, ISBN 0-9745315-0-2) is highly recommended and expands on the logical fallacies covered here plus more. It's written to be used by Christian parents with their children (also in a home school setting) but will also help individuals and married couples better understand practical logic. The chart below was taken from page 15 of the book to provide a reference point so you can understand the small (but very important) area of logic discussed here as represented by the area shaded grey.



There is an important note which you must pay attention to. The goal of our instruction is not to win at any cost. As the Bible says, the goal of our instruction is "love from a pure heart and a good conscience and in sincere faith," (1 Tim. 1:5). **Do not do apologetics for the purpose of winning an argument or trying to get the upper hand so you might look better or smarter. Such motives are sinful. You do apologetics out of obedience to God's command**

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with the goal of leading someone to Christ. Remember 1 Pet. 3:15 commands us to defend the faith with *meekness* and *fear*. So, when you point out the fallacious arguments used by those who criticize Christianity and the Bible, do so _____^{SMJ1}.

- Ad hominem - Attacking the individual instead of the argument.
 - Example: You are so stupid your argument couldn't possibly be true.
 - Example: I figured that you couldn't possibly get it right, so I ignored your comment.
- Appeal to the popular - the hearer is urged to accept a position because a majority of people hold to it.
 - Example: The majority of people like soda. Therefore, soda is good.
 - Example: Everyone else is doing it. Why shouldn't you?
- Begging the Question - Assuming the thing to be true that you are trying to prove. It is circular.
 - Example: God exists because the Bible says so. The Bible is inspired. Therefore, we know that God exists.
 - Example: I am a good worker because Frank says so. How can we trust Frank? Simple. I will vouch for him.
- Division - Assuming that what is true of the whole is true for the parts.
 - Example: That car is blue. Therefore, its engine is blue.
 - Example: Your family is weird. That means that you are weird too.
- Equivocation - The same term is used in an argument in different places but the word has different meanings.
 - Example: A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush. Therefore, a bird is worth more than President Bush.
 - Example: Evolution states that one species can change into another. We see that cars have evolved into different styles. Therefore, since evolution is a fact in cars, it is true in species.
- False Dilemma - Two choices are given when in actuality there could be more choices possible.
 - Example: You either did knock the glass over or you did not. Which is it?
 - Example: Do you still beat your wife?
- Genetic Fallacy - The attempt to endorse or disqualify a claim because of the origin or irrelevant history of the claim.
 - Example: The Nazi regime developed the Volkswagen Beetle. Therefore, you should not buy a VW Beetle because of who started it.
 - Example: Frank's just got out of jail last year and since it was his idea to start the hardware store, I can't trust him.
- Guilt by Association - Rejecting an argument or claim because the person proposing it likes someone is disliked by another.
 - Example: Hitler liked dogs. Therefore dogs are bad.

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- Example: Your friend is a thief. Therefore, I cannot trust you.
- Poisoning the well - Presenting negative information about a person before he/she speaks so as to discredit the person's argument.
 - Example: Frank is pompous, arrogant, and thinks he knows everything. So, let's hear what Frank has to say about the subject.
 - Example: Don't listen to him because he is a loser.
- Red Herring - The introduction of a topic not related to the subject at hand.
 - Example: I know your car isn't working right. But, if you had gone to the store one day earlier, you'd not be having problems.
 - Example: I know I forgot to deposit the check into the bank yesterday. But, nothing I do pleases you.
- Special Pleading (double standard) - Applying a different standard to another that is applied to oneself.
 - Example: You can't possibly understand menopause because you are a man.
 - Example: Those rules don't apply to me since I am older than you.
- Straw Man Argument - Producing an argument to attack that as a weaker representation of the truth.
 - Example: The government doesn't take care of the poor because it doesn't have a tax specifically to support the poor.
 - Example: We know that evolution is false because we did not evolve from monkeys.

All of the items in the list above are from reference material SMJ1.

Scripture Memorization

So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it. (Isaiah 55:11)

Memorizing scripture is one of the most important aspects of Christian apologetics. As the verse at the top of the page states, the word of God will go forth and accomplish what God desires. Therefore, you must memorize Scripture. Again, **you must memorize Scripture.**^{SMJ1}

If you quote something from the Bible, and do not know where it is, this _____ your witness. If you can repeatedly demonstrate the verse and the location of the verse in the Bible, it helps you to appear more _____. This has a good psychological effect with the person that you are speaking with. If you know your material, you will be more credible. Therefore, you must memorize the word of God. This does not mean that you must memorize the entire Bible (though that would be a good idea if you could). But it does mean memorizing various verses that are important, particularly in the area of who Jesus is, the nature of God, sin, and salvation. You do not need an exhaustive list of verses memorized, but it is a good idea to have as many as you can memorized. This takes practice, practice and more practice.^{SMJ1}

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Many people don't think they can memorize their way out of a new shopping mall let alone remember a verse in the Bible. The author of this text has spoken with dozens of people about Scripture memorization who say the same thing: "I have a terrible memory." His answer to them is, "Nonsense!" Everyone memorizes all the time. You've learned to speak, haven't you? You've memorized thousands of do's and don't's in life, right? You know your social security number, your phone number, your address, how many brothers, sisters, or children you have, how to get to work and what to do when you get there. The problem is not that people can't memorize, it's that they **won't** memorize. ^{SMJ1}

Memorizing scripture applies to your _____ life as well as witnessing. Both are very important and both are centered around the word of God. Now, one serious problem is that most people have memorized fewer than seven verses. The average Jehovah's Witness has committed many more to memory and, given the opportunity, could make the average Christian feel about as knowledgeable as banana bread. ^{SMJ1}

Week 7 Conclusion, Challenge & Review

That is the very basics about apologetics itself. In the upcoming classes we're going to be learning more about some basic apologetics topics. Perhaps one of the topics will grab your interest and give you the desire to learn more. If not, maybe you could consider the following.

You could pray and ask the Lord to teach you what He wants you to know. Ask Him to give you a burden for something to learn. It doesn't matter what it is. Just ask. You might be interested in dealing with Mormonism, or atheism, or evolution, or biblical evidences. It doesn't matter. Whatever you become interested in is what you should learn about because it is probably something God wants you to know for later use. It is like having tools in a tool shed. The more you have, the more you can accomplish. Once you've "mastered" one area sufficiently, you'll find yourself interested in something else. ^{SMJ1}

Another way to find out what God wants you to study is through circumstances. Let's say that a Jehovah's Witness comes to your door and debates the deity of Christ with you and you find you don't know how to defend it biblically. In that case, you know you need to study verses that teach Jesus is God in flesh. Or maybe a coworker asks you how you know the Bible is true? If you don't have an answer, pray, and start researching. ^{SMJ1} Reference these or other lessons made available here at the church. Talk to Pastor or to myself and we can help and provide some additional study material. Study on CARM (www.carm.org). You are blessed to have many options.

Sometimes God will make a verse or subject in the Bible "come alive" to you and it might strike you as odd or interesting. You could get a commentary and read up on it. You could ask others about it. In so doing, you are preparing yourself through learning to be ready to answer questions and point people to the truth. You'd be surprised how many details God can use to help you in your witness,

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even through those apparently odd times when verses suddenly "come alive."
SMJ1

Think of apologetics as a mosaic of skills and knowledge that God uses in the believer to bring the truth to the world. At first it is not that easy to do, but it gets easier and easier the more you do it and the more you study.^{SMJ1}

Today we learned about the basic types of apologetics and related topics. Next week we will continue our apologetic studies with an apologetic study on an extremely popular world philosophy, relativism.

Week 7 Challenge

I challenge you to memorize the following Bible verses (as shown below) by next Sunday. At the beginning of class next week I'll ask for someone to say two of these from memory. The first one to raise their hand and say the Scriptures from memory will earn a prize. I hope to see you all next week. Until then, I pray you have a blessed week.

But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear: (1 Peter 3:15)

Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man. (Colossians 4:6)

Week 7 Review Questions

What is the most common verse used to support the practice of apologetics?

Is it okay to use evidence from the Bible as a support for the Bible and if so, why?

What is the emphasis of classical apologetics?

What is Presuppositional Apologetics?

Why are a person's presuppositions so important?

Why is logic important in Christian apologetics

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If logic is not enough to save someone, then why should we use it?

In what manner should you point out someone's logical fallacies?

Why is memorizing scripture so important in apologetics?

Why is memorizing the location of verses so important?