

Defending Your Faith
Reasons Why the Christian Faith is Reasonable
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Lesson One - Introduction

Introduction

The purpose of this class is to help all of us obey I Peter 3:15. We are going to try to equip ourselves to “be ready to make a defense for our hope” as Christians. We propose to show in this series of lessons:

- That the Bible is the Word of God, that it is Divine, rather than human in origin and our only rule of faith and practice; and
- That Jesus is God the Son and the only way of eternal salvation and that He should be your Lord and Savior.

Disclaimer: All of my ministry, I have believed that the Bible was the Word of God. I believe it is inerrant and perfect. I believe it is our only rule of faith and practice. I believe it means what it says and says what it means. I believe that it is powerful enough to change people’s lives (Isaiah 55:10-11; I Peter 1:23; 2:2; Romans 1:16). If the Word won’t convert them, there is no other power on earth that is going to convert them. I still believe all these things, but the fact is that I Peter 3:15 teaches we should be ready to make a defense for our faith. What we are going to try to do in this class is equip ourselves to make a defense for our Christian hope.

Key Verse: 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; *I Peter 3:15*

Christians should sanctify Christ as Lord –that means we are to set Him apart in our hearts to be the authority and ruler in our life. He is the most important thing in life.

Christians should always be ready to defend their faith. The world will attack the Christian worldview. We need to be ready to defend the Christian position.

To present a defense is what the theologians call apologetics. It is to present a reasonable, logical, well ordered presentation of why we believe what we believe.

We are to give an account for the hope. The word account here is logos and it means reasonable speech.

We are to make this defense with an attitude of gentleness (meekness) and reverence. I believe the word reverence means with an attitude of respect toward the person we are talking to.

The context of this verse is about a Christian suffering for his or her faith. In a situation in which I am being persecuted because I am a Christian, I should be ready, if the opportunity presents itself to defend my position. This defense is not evangelism, but it may be pre-evangelism. If I do it correctly, it may prepare the way and open the door for the gospel to be presented.

Why don’t more people become Christians? (*Allow the students to give reasons. Discuss.*)

1. Many ignore Christianity and its claims. They never take the time to consider the evidence.
2. Some have moral problems (they simply don’t want to change their behavior –to stop sinning or to start going to church, giving, praying, etc)
3. Pride prevents many people from accepting Jesus (they have to admit they are sinners and even more difficult is that they have to admit they need help)

4. It could even be emotional if, in the past, they had a bad experience in church and with Christians
5. Some have intellectual problems with the Christian faith

The purpose of this class is to prepare ourselves to deal with those people who have intellectual problems with the Christian faith.

Biblical Evangelism Starts Where the Prospect Is and Leads Him To Where He Needs To Be

Acts 2:14-42 –Peter quoted a lot of Scripture to the Jews who believed the OT Scripture

Acts 17:22-34 –Paul did not quote a lot of Scripture, but started with creation trying to lead those practicing polytheists to the knowledge of the one true God

I Corinthians 9:22 -- *To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak; I have become all things to all men, so that I may by all means save some.*

The Christian religion is based on historical events. Historical events cannot be proven with 100% certainty like a scientific experiment that can be repeated over and over. You prove historical event using “judicial” type proof and come to a conclusion based on the preponderant of the evidence. There is more than sufficient historical evident to prove that Christianity is true in what it teaches.

The Two Main Points Of This Series of Lessons Are:

- The Bible is the Word of God –it is Divine, rather than human in origin and our only rule of faith and practice
- Jesus is God the Son and the only way of eternal salvation and He should be the Lord of your life

What is apologetics?

The Greek word for “defense” (KJV, NIV, WEB, NET: “answer”); in I Peter 3:15 is apologia, from which we get our English words apology and apologetics. I think apology originally meant “the reason why” I did or did not do something, and then it came to mean an expression of regret at having caused trouble for someone. Apologetics is a defense of Christian doctrines or beliefs.

apologia (p a, 627), a “verbal defense, a speech in defense,” is sometimes translated “answer,” in the kjv, Acts 25:16; 1 Cor. 9:3; 2 Tim. 4:16, all which the rv corrects to “defense.” See Acts 22:1; Phil. 1:7, 16; 2 Cor. 7:11, “clearing.” Once it signifies an “answer,” 1 Pet. 3:15.

Why study apologetics?

I Peter 3:15 commands us to do so.

Pre-evangelism (to open the way to faith in Jesus)

Post-evangelism (to strengthen one’s faith in Jesus and the Bible)

Conclusion

The purpose of this class is to help all of us obey I Peter 3:15. We Christians should be stay ready to defend the Christian faith to those who have intellectual questions about its truthfulness.