

Christian Evidences

A Course for BIOMA

Textbook: When Skeptics Ask

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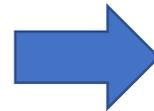
Lecture One: The Need for Christian Evidences—The need to answer Everyone Text: I Peter 3:15

I. The growing need for Pre-Evangelism.

A. Post-modernistic\Post-Christian era demonstrates a growing number of people need Pre-Evangelism before they can be evangelized.

B. Pre-Evangelism is needed first because:

1. We are speaking from the Word of God
2. We are speaking about the Son of God
3. Who died and rose again by an act of God
4. Which brings the salvation from God



To people who **do not** believe in God

C. Contrast between Pre-Evangelism and Evangelism in the form of a chart

Pre-Evangelism	Evangelism
Clearing the way for the gospel	Proclaiming the gospel
To those who do not believe in God, truth, and or the Bible	To those who believe in God but do not believe in Christ or who have not trusted him as personal Savior
A precondition for the gospel	The content is the gospel: the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ
Based on reason, centered on logic	Based on Revelation, centered on Scripture
Defends the foundations of the gospel	Declares the faith of the gospel
The goal is the pre-understanding of the gospel, preparation	The goal is accepting the gospel, salvation

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D. The gospel is based on a Theistic view of God as presented in the Bible. It clearly teaches:

1. That God is infinite (above space and time, beyond our present reality, without beginning or end)
2. That God is personal (not an impersonal force)
3. That God is transcendent (above or beyond the world)
4. That God is the Creator (Genesis 1:1; John 1:1-2)
5. That God can intervene in the world that He made in a miraculous way anytime He chooses to do so

E. Statistics show that only a little over half the population of the world believes in a Theistic God as defined in the preceding point. Almost $\frac{1}{2}$ of the world needs to be pre-evangelized.

F. Pre-Evangelism and Evangelism are therefore two different but complementary ministries

1. We all know the Bible commands evangelism (i.e. The Great Commission)
2. Pre-evangelism is equally commanded by the Scriptures (I Peter 3:15)
3. Just as evangelism is commanded to all so pre-Evangelism is commanded to all and not simply specially trained or elite Christians
4. Three simple reasons compel us to be involved in pre-evangelism:
 - a. Unbelievers have good questions
 - 1.) Their honest questions are usually not trivial
 - 2.) Their honest questions generally cut deep into the heart of the faith
 - 3.) Their honest questions usually challenge the very foundations of the faith i.e.

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a.) If miracles are not possible today, why should we believe in Christ is God?

b.) If God can control evil, is he worthy of worship?

4.) If these and other objections cannot be answered is Christianity anything less than a fairytale?

5.) Reasonable questions (and even unreasonable questions) can and should be answered and deserve the answers from logic and from the Word of God

b. Christianity has good answers

1.) Most real skeptics have only heard the questions but it never really stopped to consider the answers

2.) As Christians we have **great answers** to their questions

3.) Christianity is true

a.) Reality is on our side

b.) We simply need to provide the appropriate evidence to answer the question

4.) Christian thinkers (apologists) have been answering these questions and many more since the time of the apostle Paul and even before his time.

5.) We have a ready and realistic set of answers (Evidences) for their questions

c. God commands us (Christians) to give the good questions of the unbelievers' good answers from the Scripture, from reason, and logic.

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1.) This is the most important reason of all since it is scriptural (I Peter 5:15). This verse teaches us several key things:

a.) We must be ready

1.] We may never run into someone with really tough questions, but we should be ready in case we do

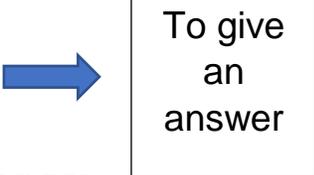
2.] Being ready is not just having the information at our command, but also being ready and eager to share with others the truth of what we believe.

b.) We are to give a reason to those who ask questions

1.] Not everyone needs pre-evangelism but many do

a.] We must be able

b.] We must be willing



To give
an
answer

c.) Giving these answers links doing pre-evangelism with making Christ Lord of our own heart

1.] If Christ is Lord, we should be obedient to him in:

a.] Casting down imaginations
(Foolish human speculation)

b.] and every high thing that
exalteth itself against the
knowledge of God

c.] And bringing into captivity
every thought to the obedience of
Christ (II Corinthians 10:5)

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2.] This is the essence of pre-evangelism

d.) Finally, we need not only to contemplate what we shall say, but how we shall say it.

1.] It should be done with:

[a.] Meekness-gentleness

[b.] Fear-respect

2.] So that we don't simply win an argument but gain a soul. Sadly, Apologetics gone wrong can result in winning the argument and losing a soul for eternity. This should never be!

3.] This is all in accord with Colossians 4:6

1.) There are other commandments concerning pre-evangelism in the Scripture:

a.) Jude 3, 22

1.] The recipients of Jude's Epistle were being assaulted by false teachers

2.] He encouraged them to protect the faith as it had been revealed through Christ

3.] Verse 22 deals with attitude-compassion upon the doubting

b.) Titus 1:9

1.] A knowledge of Christian Evidences is a prerequisite for church leadership

2.] Holding fast the faithful word

3.] As he hath been taught

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4.] That he might be able by sound doctrine (healthy teaching)

5.] Both to exhort

6.] And convince

7.] The gainsayers

c.) II Timothy 2:24-25 indicates the proper attitude for this work:

1.] Not strident

2.] Characterized by kindness

3.] Apt to teach

4.] Marked by patience

5.] Gentle in reclaiming the self-destructive

6.] With the goal of bringing people to repentance

7.] And acknowledgment of sound doctrine

8.] In summary: anyone attempting to answer the questions of Unbelievers can expect to be misrepresented, wrong, and even ridiculed. And of course this will tempt them to lose their patience with unbelievers. However, our ultimate goal is that they might come to a saving knowledge of the truth that Jesus died for their sins. With so crucial a task, we dare not neglect God's command to have a proper attitude.

II. Objections to Pre-Evangelism and Apologetics and Scriptural answers to them. (Here are five most common objections):

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A. The Bible says not to answer a fool in his folly (Proverbs 26:4)

1. We acknowledge the truth of this and the very nearly opposite statement in verse five.
2. Careful examination of the text as a whole indicates that Solomon's point is that we need to be careful how and when we choose to confront false ideas
3. On the other hand, we should never argue with unreasonable or insane people, lest we end up looking as foolish as they do.
4. But if a person is trapped in wrong thinking and you are able to show them the truth in a way that they can understand, perhaps they can be persuaded to abandon their folly for the truth.
5. Examples of both:
 - a. The Lord Jesus Christ refused to even speak to Herod when he was on trial before Herod's court. Herod was committed to the same folly that ran through his family and only wish to make sport of Jesus Christ.
 - b. JRR Tolkien and Hugo Dyson spent many hours of pre-evangelism counseling CS Lewis, then an atheist, concerning the Christian faith. Lewis not only became a committed Christian but was in fact a pioneer modern apologist.

B. Logic, which is a primary weapon of pre-evangelism, is not a valid way to tell anyone about God.

1. Ironically, this very statement is a logical statement. It claims to be true while the opposite claims to be false.
2. In order to argue that logic does not apply to God, you have to apply logic to God in that very statement. This of course is nonsense.

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3. This claim is called the law of non-contradiction and is basically the foundation for all logic.
4. Logic and thinking logically is inescapable for human beings who are created in the image of God.
5. When a truth cannot be denied it must be considered true.
6. Logic can tell us some things about God-for instance since God is truth, He cannot lie. Hebrews 6:18
7. Logic can be used as a valid tool for the discovery of truth.
8. Logic must be used effectively with non-Christians who do not believe that the Bible is the Word of God.
9. Once we get them to the point of accepting the Bible, we then switch from rational argumentation to revelatory affirmation, which alone can indeed bring a person to true faith.

C. If pre-evangelism is biblical, why don't we see it done in the Bible?

1. The fact is it was done frequently in the Bible-we simply fail to recognize it.
 - a. Moses uses it in the first chapter of Genesis which clearly confronts the mythical accounts of creation prevalent in his day.
 - b. Elijah used it-the whole scene on Mount Carmel was for the purpose of proving the superiority of Jehovah-Yahweh.
 - c. The Lord Jesus Christ used logic-is meeting with the woman at the well is a great example of confronting the social, religious, and moral barriers lost people have to the faith.

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d. The apostle Paul used it frequently-on at least four separate occasions Paul made his case for the faith to Unbelievers from different religious backgrounds:

- 1.) Acts 14:8-18 Paul at Lystra
- 2.) Acts 17:16-34 Paul at Athens
- 3.) Acts 24:5-21 Paul before Felix
- 4.) Acts 26:1-29 Paul before Agrippa

2. In addition to the passages we've already discussed, many times the New Testament authors confront false teachers and their teachings in Scripture. God has reached out to the world with the message of his love.

D. Isn't faith enough? Why do we need to reason with people?

1. In spite of the fact that the Bible commands it, there are several other reasons for doing pre-evangelism:

- a. Reason demands it
- b. Our culture needs it
- c. Results confirm it

2. Also, the active doing pre-evangelism aids us as believers:

- a. It helps us examine our own faith. (Socrates wrote that the unexamined life is not worthy to be live.)
- b. God does not bypass the head on the way to the heart
- c. Both we and the people we deal with need to be sure about:

- 1.) The existence of God
- 2.) The possibility of miracles

3.) The objectivity of truth

4.) The knowability of history

E. Apologetics does not work, only the Holy Spirit can truly save.

1. Only the Holy Spirit can draw and save a lost sinner. (John 3:6; Ephesians 2:1-10)

2. But this is not to say that the Holy Spirit cannot use evidence and reason

a. To assume that the God of reason who created human reason and his image would not use reason to reach reasoning people is not a reasonable proposition! (Isaiah 1:18)

b. It is not either the Holy Spirit or reason, but it is the Holy Spirit using reason in Scripture to bring a soul to Christ.

c. Indeed, the Holy Spirit uses reason to save people who must use their reason to understand the gospel they are believing and by which they are saved. (Romans 1:16)

3. Further, to claim that reason and evidence do not work in the hands of the Holy Spirit is contrary to fact. Notable conversions have come about by the pre-evangelistic use of reason and evidence. Here are some of the many examples:

a. Augustine (see his **Confessions**)

b. CS Lewis

c. Frank Morrison (**Who Moved the Stone**)

d. Josh McDowell (**Evidence That Demands a Verdict**)

e. Lee Strobel (**The Case for Christ**)

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f. The remarkable pronouncement of Anthony Flew (Prominent atheist and university professor who wrecked the faith of multitude of Oxford students, until he was forced by the evidence for Christianity to make the following remarkable statement: “Nor do I claim to have had any personal experience of God or any experience that might be called Supernatural or miraculous. In short, my discovery of the divine has been a pilgrimage of reason and not of faith.”

Your Notes: