

Introductory Notes on Apologetics and The Philosophy of The Christian Worldview

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Chapter One

Introduction

*“Theology tells us what to believe,
apologetics tells us why to believe it”*

Introduction to Christian Apologetics

At one time in America, Christianity provided the foundation for government, education, and individual behavior. Faith and learning were an integrated process in which there was no such thing as a separation of the sacred and the **secular**.¹ However, the anti-Christian predisposition that has developed in **postmodern** America has cultivated an outright hatred toward Christians and their worldview. So much so, that in American politics and public education the secularist has become militantly hostile against anything that slightly resembles the sacred leaving the confinement of the church walls and entering the secular environment. Christianity today, when it enters the secular setting is charged with being irrational, intolerant, judgmental, offensive, homophobic, hypocritical, and archaic. Richard Dawkins, world famous atheist and Oxford professor, encourages people to “mock” Christians, and “ridicule” them in public.² The late best-selling author Christopher Hitchens wrote, “I’m an atheist. I’m not neutral about religion, I’m hostile to it. I think it is a positively bad idea, not just a false one. And I mean not just organized religion, but religious belief itself.”³ And then there is Bill Nye, also known as “the science guy.” This lovable bow tie wearing atheist who has had the privilege of teaching most of our children, both on Saturday morning television and in the public text books, has effectively declared that anyone who is Christian is incapable of being a scientifically literate voter, an engineer, a builder, or a problem solver. He said:

I say to the grown-ups, if you want to deny evolution and live in your world that is completely inconsistent with everything we observe in the universe, that’s fine, but don’t make your kids do it because we need them. We need scientifically literate voters and tax payers for the future. We need engineers. We need people who can build stuff, solve problems.⁴

Likewise, Daniel C. Dennett who is an atheist and a member of the Secular Coalition for America advisory board, claims that he and the rest of the secularist who control the American public education will take every opportunity when we send our kids to public schools to convince them of the “falsehoods” of Christianity. He writes:

Secularism. *A belief system, attitude or style of life that denies or ignores the reality of God. Derived from a term that means “worldly,” secularism focuses on the natural order of things as the only reality (No Supernatural i.e., God). Much in modern culture pressures people to live in such a way that God is marginal and insignificant to their daily existence.*

-- *Pocket Dictionary of Apologetics & Philosophy of Religion*

Postmodern *A term used to designate a variety of intellectual and cultural developments in late-twentieth-century Western society. The postmodernist rejects the modernist values of Christianity. The postmodernist rejects the reality of the absolute truth moral standard that Christianity puts forth.*

-- *Pocket Dictionary of Apologetics & Philosophy of Religion*

If you insist on teaching your children falsehoods—that the Earth is flat, that “Man” is not a product of evolution by natural selection—then you must expect, at the very least, that those of us who have freedom of speech will feel free to describe your teachings as the spreading of falsehoods, and will attempt to demonstrate this to your children at our earliest opportunity. Our future wellbeing—the well-being of all of us on the planet — depends on the education of our descendants.⁵

More alarming, a resolution passed on August 17, 2019 was worded:

Those [Christians] most loudly claiming that morals, values, and patriotism must be defined by their particular religious views have used those religious views, with misplaced claims of “religious liberty,” to justify public policy that has threatened the civil rights and liberties of many Americans, including but not limited to the LGBT community, women, and ethnic and religious/nonreligious minorities ...⁶

In a recent supreme court nomination hearing a senator declared a nominee unfit for service as a federal judge because of her deeply held Christian religious beliefs. The senator remarked:

You are controversial, . . . You have a long history of believing that your religious [Christian] beliefs should prevail. . . When you read your speeches, the conclusion one draws is that the dogma lives loudly within you, . . . And that’s of concern when you come to big issues that large numbers of people have fought for years in this country.⁷

So in other words, what the senator is loudly conveying to all Christians is that the sacred has no place in the secular. We need to keep our Christianity, that is, “our dogma” confined to the church walls. Our Christianity has no place in government trying to deal with weightier matters such as law. It is clear, the Christian nor the Christian worldview gets a seat at the table.

And just now as Jews celebrate the Passover and Christians celebrate Easter (2022) The New York Times published an article criticizing God on Good Friday. The author declares God is “hateful” and full of “brutality,” he says we should stop praising, emulating and imploring our children to be like him. He writes:

Perhaps now, as missiles rain down and the dead are discovered in mass graves, is a good time to stop emulating this hateful God. Perhaps we can stop extolling his brutality. Perhaps now is a good time to teach our children to pass over God — to be as unlike him as possible.⁸

As a result of this hostile propaganda, David Noebel has rightfully observed that, “the Christian community is having little influence in the larger society, especially in the areas of education, government, and the mass media.”⁹ Christianity has been dismissed academically and banned publicly because it is not considered to be a legitimate worldview in the marketplace of ideas. America is now postmodern and priding itself on pluralism—every worldview is considered legitimate and gets a seat at the table, that is, so long as your worldview is not Christian. Taking its cue from the public universities, America today is largely **relativistic** wherein the very essence of objective truth and morality are denied. Truth has been replaced with tolerance (acceptance). Tolerance, rather than truth, has been elevated as the supreme good. Even more detrimental, speaking the truth of Christianity today in public makes one subject to the crime of **hate speech**. Sadly, the fact of this is, Christians remain to be ill-prepared and ill-equipped to defend their faith against the accusations of the world.

We Christians as a whole have failed to understand our faith, live out our faith, share our faith, teach our faith, and defend our faith. Instead of acting as if we

are the ones who have truth on our side, as J. P. Moreland has noted, “we often come off as shallow, defensive, and reactionary, instead of thoughtful, confident, and articulate.”¹⁰ In short, Christians have ceased to be the salt and light of the world and we have allowed the secular worldview to overtake and hold hostage all that God has declared to be sacred. The secular worldview has hijacked our government, our judicial system, and our public school system. It has confined the Christian faith to remain inside the boundaries of the church walls. Worst of all, secularism has stolen the hearts and minds of our youth and it will not rest until it has rendered the Christian ineffective and irrelevant in any matters having to do with shaping America's social structure. John Frame explains America's distorted view of the separation of church and state as follows:

Public school children are able to hear advocacy of every system of thought except those that are arbitrarily labeled ‘religious.’ Who is to say that the truth might not be found in, or even limited to, one of these religious positions? Is it even remotely fair, in terms of freedom of thought and speech, to restrict public education to allegedly secular viewpoints? Is this not brainwashing of the worst kind?

Relativism. *The theory that denies that humans can possess any objective, universally meaningful knowledge, that there are any ultimate and unchanging realities (God, persons, space, time, natural laws) or that there are any moral absolutes. Hence meaning and truth are relative to each culture and historical period or to each person, situation, relationship and outcome.*

-- *Pocket Dictionary of Theological Terms*

Hate Speech. *Speech, writing, or nonverbal communication that attacks, threatens, or insults a person or group on the basis of national origin, ethnicity, color, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, or disability.*

--*Dictionary.com*

It is appalling to think that Christians are paying (with their tax dollars) for this secular indoctrination of their kids. And make no mistake about it, the public school system is not about education, it is about indoctrination. Education is in fact just that, educating. Education should train one to discover and evaluate truth claims (think critically and logically). This is not the foundation of a public education system that excludes everything that is not secular in nature. The public school system does not remain neutral in their educational foundation (there is no such thing). The public school system is built on the philosophical frame work of **naturalism**. This is clearly, secular indoctrination and this is by design. As Gary DeMar has said, “the one who controls the schools rules the world.”¹¹

The purpose of this book and the aim of **Christian apologetics** in general is to educate and train the Christian to know what they believe, why they believe it, and be adequately equipped to defend it. It is a well-developed fact that, “when people learn what they believe and why, they become bold in their witness and attractive in the way they engage others in debate or dialogue.”¹² Although Christian apologetics may be a new concept for some, it is not new to Christianity. It is a biblical concept that permeates the entirety of Scripture and consequentially, it is not optional for the Christian but rather it is a biblical command. Apologetics comes from the Greek word **apologia** which generally means a defense, reason, or an answer. Christian apologetics is then giving an answer, reason, or a defense for what the Bible claims to be true. The most dominant verse is **1 Peter 3:15**, “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.”¹³ The word “answer” is *apologia* which means a defense.

Naturalism. The philosophical framework that bases everything on the belief that nature is the whole show. There is no supernatural realm nor intervention into the natural world by the supernatural. Naturalism is based on the following six propositions:

1. Only nature exists.
2. Nature has always existed.
3. Nature is characterized by total uniformity.
4. Nature is a deterministic system.
5. Nature is a materialistic system.
6. Nature is self-explanatory.

-- Ronald Nash, *Worldviews in Conflict*

Christian Apologetics. The branch of theology that is concerned with defending or proving the truth of Christian doctrines.

--The American Heritage Dictionary

Apologia. Greek word which generally means defense, reason, or answer. Apologetics is knowing what and why you believe something to be true and being able to defend it.

1 Peter 3:15 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:

Thus, in doing Christian apologetics we are not apologizing (saying were sorry) for our faith but rather we are giving a rational defense for it. It is also important to note that Christian apologetics at this level is not necessarily defending a certain form or denomination of Christianity, it is rather, defending the basics of what C. S. Lewis calls “Mere Christianity.” That is to say, the basic traditional orthodox Christian faith that teaches the reality of creation, fall, and redemption but moreover, it is defending what stands behind those biblical truths. That is, God exist, and we can know He exist because He revealed to us His thoughts, ways, and actions. Mere Christianity then takes on the form of defending the most foundational beliefs of the Christian worldview. The most fundamental belief in Christianity is that we **believe** Christianity because it is **true**. Belief is a necessary condition for knowledge. But, in and of itself, belief is not sufficient for knowledge.¹⁴ It would be irrational to believe in something that was false. Moreover, it is impossible to have **knowledge** of something if it is false. Christians are justified in their knowledge of Christianity simply because it is true. The faith we put in Christianity is not a blind faith, an irrational faith, or worse off, a faith based on feelings and emotions alone. Christianity is a faith based upon sound reasoning and evidence. Because God exist—**absolute truth** exists. Because God exist—**absolute morality** exists. Because God has revealed Himself to us—we can know the unchanging, absolute, and objective nature of both truth and morality.

By defending Christianity, we are defending a worldview that best describes the world we live in from the top down. It best answers and corresponds to what we experience in everyday life. The Christian worldview is a comprehensive, coherent, and consistent view of all of reality. It speaks to every area of life. It is knowable, rational, experiential, and capable of being lived out. No other worldview meets this criterion. By defending the Christian worldview, we are defending a worldview that is far superior to all other worldviews. Christianity is a worldview that is unsurpassed by any philosophy, science, or religion when it comes to the explanatory power of the origin of time, space, and matter. It best answers the greatest philosophical questions of all: origin, identity, meaning, morality, and destiny.

Belief. *A positive mental attitude toward a proposition; something a person accepts as true.*

Truth. *Truth accurately reflects, represents, and corresponds to reality.*

Knowledge. *Knowledge is true, justified belief.*

Absolute truth. *Truth that is not dependent on, conditioned by, or relative to anything else. Absolute truth is universal, it transcends time, space, and matter. That is to say, if something is true, it is true at all times, it is true in all places, and it is true and binding (objective) for all people.*

Absolute morality. *The unchanging standard of what is right and wrong, good or bad. Absolute morality is universal, it transcends time, space, and matter. That is to say, if something is moral, it is moral at all times, it is moral in all places, and it is binding (objective) for all people.*

Objective. *Something that is true independent of anyone’s opinion about it. Something is objective if it is the same for all people.*

Subjective. *Something is subjective if it is just a matter of personal opinion.*

- Origin: Where did I come from?
- Identity: Who or what am I?
- Meaning: What is my purpose?
- Morality: How should I behave?
- Destiny: What happens to me when I die?

Every worldview, and that means both religious and non-religious is formed out of an attempt to answers the above most basic questions of life. However, the Christian worldview answers these questions in a way that is more plausible than secularism, or any other worldview for that matter. The Christian worldview is rational, experiential, and yes, even scientific. Moreover, the Christian worldview allows a believer to live a consistent and coherent life with the facts of both nature and the teachings of Scripture. Furthermore, Christianity best describes what is wrong with the world and what is wrong, in particular, with mankind. Most importantly and finally, it offers the only true and obtainable solution to remedy the problem of mankind. So, the Christian worldview is not to be considered merely a tolerable worldview when one is shopping for a worldview in the supermarket of ideas, it has to be the only one on the shelf. It is to be defended as the only worldview capable of adequately representing the foundation of all of reality (the way the world really is).

The most debated and emotionally stirring social topics of today are, homosexuality, gender, marriage, and abortion. The foremost problem with the conflict between our secular society and the Christian is that both typically enter the debate failing to acknowledge how they arrived at their view. They both often times ignore the starting point. We will define the starting point as one's **presuppositions** or worldview. It is our worldview that provides the framework for our thoughts, ideas, and convictions. Ignoring the concept of worldview in the debate is as futile as a physician who tries to treat symptoms rather than the underlying cause of the symptoms. A physician knows, symptoms do not cause symptoms nor do they exist in and of themselves. A Symptom is an effect not a cause. A symptom is only an indication, a sign, or a manifestation of an underlying illness or disease. Symptoms are only what the patient sees or feels, but for the physician, they lead to the underlying cause or the starting point of the problem. A fever is often a symptom caused by a virus or an infection. The fever is only the effect of an underlying cause. A physician treats the cause not the effect.

***Presuppositions.** A worldview is a commitment to a set of presuppositions about the way one believes the world to be. Presuppositions are what form a worldview. Presupposition or "pre-supposing" means we suppose things are a certain way. We believe things are this way and not that way. The "pre" or "before" means we are supposing things are the way they are before we have a lot of evidence. Presuppositions are beliefs that are not built upon other beliefs. Presuppositions are first beliefs. They are the starting point for all knowledge. As Augustine noted, we must believe something before we can know anything.*

Deeply held convictions on issues such as homosexuality, gender, marriage, and abortion are merely the symptoms of an underlying cause. Like a good physician, the Christian must develop

the ability to distinguish the cause from the effect. We cannot enter the debate and argue symptoms and hope for any meaningful change. Likewise, we cannot be so foolish as to tell the non-Christians they are having the wrong symptoms (more on that below). Christians must be adequately equipped to diagnose and treat the cause (presuppositions) of symptoms and do it with compassion, tact, and skill.

Contrary to public opinion, in the debate on these difficult social issues, each side carries the burden of justifying their view. That is to plainly say, any time an individual wants to impose their beliefs and convictions on another as binding truth, they are responsible first, to investigate and know why they hold the position they do and second, to justify it. There is no justification in saying “you ought” or “you can’t” in and of itself. The “ought” and the “can’t” are symptoms (effects) of a greater cause. What I am trying to articulate is this: just as it would be futile for a doctor to treat symptoms as if they caused themselves, it is irrational and vain for our society to argue about symptoms (ethical matters) such as homosexuality, gender, marriage, and abortion as if they caused themselves. Ignoring the underlying cause leads to arguments that are grounded on no more than preference or sentiment. To argue these topics on a purely emotional level, void of any justifying logic or rationality, will only lead to more emotion and quite frankly, more animosity toward Christianity. The argument must take place at the starting point which is the fundamental worldview level of what one presupposes about reality, knowledge, ethics, and humanness. As C. S. Lewis explains it:

...different beliefs about the universe lead to different behavior. Religion [Christianity] involves a series of statements about facts, which must be either true or false. If they are true, one set of conclusions will follow about the right sailing of the human fleet, if they are false, quite another.¹⁵

For example, a Christian believes God to be creator of all, which in turns means that matters such as homosexuality, gender, marriage, and abortion are matters to be legislated by God. This conviction often has little to no effect on the secularist—the secularist does not believe the Christian to be saying something that is sensible enough to merit serious consideration because the secularist’s verifiable frame of reference (worldview) does not include God.¹⁶ A worldview narrows down, and for the most part, determines what one can and will believe on the issues of life. Christian philosopher Ronald Nash put it this way:

Basic assumptions or presuppositions are important because of the way they determine the method and goal of theoretical thought. They can be compared to a train running on tracks that have no switches. Once a person commits himself to a certain set of presuppositions, his direction and destination are determined.¹⁷

Because symptoms are just the product of an underlying cause—they are mere convictions brought to fruition by a set of presuppositions (worldview). As Christians we cannot be so ignorant as to claim the secularist are having the wrong symptoms. Nor can we try to refute the secularist for having come to the logical conclusion that their presuppositions (worldview) have provided

them. **If** there is no supernatural being (God) who created the world and everything in it, who is subsequently the absolute standard for things such as truth, love, and morality, **then** the secularist can rightly conclude that the individual has every right to determine truth and morality for themselves. As Gary DeMar writes, “the denial of one sovereign assumes the sovereignty of another. There are no exceptions. If God is denied as the only true and independent sovereign, man will claim this attribute for himself.”¹⁸ Based on the fact that a secularist has replaced God’s sovereignty with their own, they can declare homosexual relationships to be normal and good. They can proclaim a person has the right to decide their own gender. They can define the boundaries of marriage. And moreover, they can justly affirm a woman has the absolute right to terminate her pregnancy anytime she so chooses. Above all, they are correct to conclude, the sacred has no place in the secular. There can be no prohibition on secular morality from an absolute standard of morality if that absolute standard of morality (God) does not exist. As Dr. Nash put it in the above quote, a worldview is like a one-way set of tracks with no switches. The secularist is on a set of tracks that has predetermined their destination (the cause has predetermined the effect). The consequences of a secular worldview are laid out on the tracks before them (no God, no absolute standard for morality). It would be futile to stand on the tracks frantically declaring as they go by, “you’re going the wrong way!” For they have but one way to go. However, it would be more than appropriate, and I would argue, a moral obligation, to stand on the tracks and declare, “you’re on the wrong tracks!” As Philip E. Johnson, who was a long time UC Berkeley law professor explains, “understanding how worldviews are formed, and how they guide or confine thought, is the essential step toward understanding everything else.”¹⁹ It is highly improbable anyone will change their convictions on complex ethical matters without first changing their worldview. Thus, our goal as Christian apologist is to give ample evidence for why the Christian is on the right tracks and by counterexample demonstrate why the secularist is on the wrong tracks. Our goal is to move from the realm of constantly quarreling superficially over effects and move into the realm of thoughtful debate over underlying causes. We want to move into the area that stands behind one’s actions. We want to move into the area of metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics. **Metaphysics**—what is ultimate reality, to which there are only three possibilities. We will discuss these possibilities in a later section. **Epistemology**—where does knowledge come from, which is determined by how one answers the metaphysical question. **Ethics**—what is right and wrong, which is determined by how one answers the previous two questions. These three are the basics of all that exist, as such they make up the viewpoint of everything.²⁰ These **philosophical** presuppositions, as was discussed previously, are the cause of all symptoms. They predetermine what one believes about everything. They are, as we said, like a set of railroad tracts with no switches. Once a person commits himself to a certain set of presuppositions, his direction and destination are determined. Finally, how will we accomplish this? How will we become good Christian apologist? We will start by studying and becoming proficient in the broad areas of **Philosophy** and **logic**.

1. **Philosophy:** The branch of study that finds truth through logic, evidence, and science.
2. **Logic:** Logic is the study of right reasoning. To reason logically is to reason correctly. Correct reasoning helps to identify truth.
3. **Metaphysics:** Metaphysics is the study of “reality.” More specifically, it is the study of reality that is beyond scientific or mathematical realms. The term “metaphysics” itself literally means “beyond the physical.” The metaphysical issues most discussed are the existence of God, the soul, and the afterlife.
4. **Epistemology:** Epistemology is the study of “knowledge.” Epistemology deals with the process by which we can know that something is true. It addresses questions such as,
 - a. What can I know?
 - b. how is knowledge acquired?
 - c. Can we be certain of anything?

With epistemology there are two important categories:

- a. Rationalism - rationalism stresses reason as the most important element in knowing. Rationalism holds that knowledge is gained primarily through the mind. It also asserts that we are born with an innate ideas that precede any experience we may have with our physical sense.
 - b. Empiricism - empiricism asserts that all our knowledge comes from our five senses. To use the terminology of the empiricist John Locke, our minds are “blank slates” at birth. Thus, all knowledge comes from our experiences.
4. **Ethics:** Ethics is the study of moral value, right and wrong. Ethics is involved with placing value to personal actions, decisions, and relations. Important ethical issues today include sexual morality, gender identity, marriage, capital punishment, euthanasia, and the environment.²¹

Philosophy	The branch of study that finds truth through logic, evidence, and science.	
Metaphysics	Study of existence	What is real?
Epistemology	Study of knowledge	How do I know about it?
Ethics	Study of Action	What should I do about it?

- God does not exist
- Miracles are not possible
- The universe (matter) is all there is
- The universe is eternal
- Evolution explains everything

- How do you know that?
- Where did you get that information?
- What evidence do you have to support it?

Metaphysics
What is ultimate reality?

- Science tells us everything we can to know
- We receive information from our five senses (empiricism)
- Experience is the true source of knowledge

- How do you know that?
- Where did you get that information?
- What evidence do you have to support it?

Epistemology
How do you know?

- Christians should not impose their morals on others
- I have the right to do what I want with my body
- I have the right to decide my gender
- I have the right to determine who I marry

- How do you know that?
- Where did you get that information?
- What evidence do you have to support it?

Ethics
What is right and wrong?

Chapter Two

What is Apologetics?

*“Theology tells us what to believe,
apologetics tells us why to believe it”*

Christian Apologetics

Apologetics is knowing what and why you believe something to be true and being able to defend it. Christian apologetics is then defending the validity of the Christian faith. It is defending the truth of God and the teachings of His Word. It is giving an intellectual and coherent defense for the truth claims of Christianity. Quite simply, apologetics is being able to answer someone when they ask, “why do you believe that?” or “how did you come to that conclusion?”

Most Christians do not like to be confrontational. In fact, when Christians hear words like defense and **argument**, most do not think of them as being virtuous biblical concepts. This is because most confuse argument with altercation. An altercation is a brawl. An argument is a series of reasons which one uses to prove the truth of what one wishes to assert.²² In the true sense of the word, and in Christian apologetics, an argument is a good and necessary thing. As Christians we are making an argument when we are providing reasons for the basis of a biblical conclusion, (see Isa 1:18 come now let us reason together). Emotions are not (and should never be) the basis of an argument.²³ An argument aims to establish facts. Truth is the goal. Every time a Christian shares the gospel, we are in fact giving an argument. We are providing the reasons for the basis

for the logical conclusion that one should believe the gospel. The ultimate **goal** of a Christian apologist is not merely to win an argument but to win a person to Christ. The pure motive or end goal for doing apologetics with non-Christians must always be to bring them to truth and a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. As gratifying as it may be to win an argument or prove your opponents to be unworthy, that cannot be the reason why we engage in apologetics. Whatever we do, it must be done in meekness (1 Petr 3:15) and with grace (Colossians 4:6). Jesus came in grace and truth (John 1:14) and engaged in rational arguments with both believers and non-believers alike for the sole purpose of winning them to the truth. He never compromised the truth but always displayed grace in His argument. Likewise, Paul, a master apologist said, “speak the truth in love” (Eph 4:15). We can argue for the truth but we are commanded to argue out of love and compassion. There is an enormous difference in arguing with someone because you are concerned for the harm their err will bring them, and arguing with someone because you disapprove of their behavior and simply wish to make them look more like you.

Argument. By argument we mean simply the providing of reasons for the basis of a conclusion. Emotions are not (and should never be) involved at all in this sense of argument. Emotions are not an adequate test for truth.

--Norm Geisler

The Goal. The ultimate goal of Christian apologetics is not merely to win an argument or force our convictions upon others. It is to open the eyes of nonbelievers to the truth and reality of God and His Word. The pure motive or end goal for doing apologetics with non-Christians must always be to bring them to truth and a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Two Distinct Roles of Apologetics

Apologetics can take on a negative (defensive) or positive (offensive) role. The goal of negative apologetics is to refute the arguments against Christianity (truth) with the intention of removing any obstacles that might be hindering someone from believing. The role of positive apologetics is to offer reasons why a non-believer should become a believer (or believe the truth). When doing negative apologetics, the burden of proof is considered to be placed on the one trying to disprove Christianity much like it is for the prosecutor in a court room who shoulders the burden of proof to prove the defendant is guilty. On the other hand, when doing positive apologetics, it would seem the Christian carries the burden of proof.²⁴ The chart below identifies the two objectives.

Positive Apologetics	Negative Apologetics
Offense	Defense
Builds a case for Christianity by presenting a positive case for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The objective nature of truth • The objective nature of morality • The existence of God • The reality of miracles • The validity of the Bible • The deity of Christ 	Answers any objections given toward Christianity by defending: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The objective nature of truth • The objective nature of morality • The existence of God • The reality of miracles • The validity of the Bible • The deity of Christ
Pre-evangelism—paving the way for the gospel	Refute claims against the gospel
Evangelism—tell the truth of the gospel	Defend the truth of the gospel
Tells you what you should believe	Tells you what you should not believe
Offer proof, evidence	Remove doubt
Burden of proof is on the believer	Burden of proof is on the nonbeliever

The Biblical Concept of Apologetics

1. **It is giving a reason for our hope:** 1 Peter 3:15 *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:*
2. **It is defending the gospel:** Philippians 1:7 *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 **defence and confirmation** of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace.*
3. **It is answering every question:** Colossians 4:6 *Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to **answer** every man.*
4. **It is contending for the faith:** Jude 3 *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 ye should earnestly **contend** for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.*
5. **It is reasoning (disputing) from the scriptures:** Acts 17:17 *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.*
6. **It is taking every thought captive to Christ:** 2 Corinthians 10:5 *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;*
7. **It is refuting those who oppose sound doctrine:** Titus 1:9 *Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to **exhort and to convince** the gainsayers.*
8. **It is instructing them who oppose sound doctrine:** 2 Timothy 2:24-25 *And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, In meekness **instructing those that oppose** themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;*

The Reason for Apologetics

1. **It is a biblical command:** The first reason for the Christian to do apologetics is out of obedience to God's will. The biblical text below are in no way suggestive in nature for the Christian. They are direct imperatives.

- Give a reason for your hope (1 Peter 3:15)
- Defend the Gospel (Phil 1:7)
- Answer every question (Col 4:6)
- Contend for the faith (Jude 3)
- Take every thought captive: (2 Cor 10:5)

2. **To pre-evangelize:** Pre-evangelism deals particularly with worldviews. The majority of the world is non-theistic, which means they do not subscribe to the truth of the Christian worldview or even the possibility of that truth.

As we have seen in previous sections, when a person commits himself to a certain set of presuppositions, the outcome is predetermined. These presuppositions such as naturalism must be overcome so that they do not hinder or blind a person from the real truth. It is often times philosophical and scientific presuppositions that must be removed. Pre-evangelism opens the mind to the possibility of a theistic God.²⁵

Unless there is a God, there cannot be:

- The Son of God
- The Word of God
- The miraculous acts of God
- The salvation of God

3. **To evangelize the world with the Gospel:** The most vital part of Christianity is the gospel, the good news (*euangelion*). The gospel is defined by Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:3-4. Without the gospel, it is impossible for a person to be saved. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance that a believer knows the gospel and is able to share it with anyone in a way in which they can understand it. If Christians have any chance at reshaping our culture, we must equip ourselves to be better at explaining our faith. As William Lane Craig, (someone who has debated Christianity at the highest level of academia) notes:

Defending The Gospel. [Believers] know the truth but are not necessarily equipped to share or articulate the truth in a way that is understandable to those who have questions about their faith. It is quite possible to believe something is true without having a proper understanding of it or the ability to articulate it.

--Holman QuickSource Guide to Christian Apologetics

If the gospel is to be heard as an intellectually viable option for thinking men and women today, then it's vital that we as Christians try to shape American culture in such a way that Christian belief cannot be dismissed as a mere superstition. This is where Christian apologetics comes in. If Christians could be trained to provide solid evidence for what they believe and good answers to unbelievers' questions and objections, then the perception of Christians would slowly change. Christians would be seen as thoughtful people to be taken seriously rather than as emotional fanatics or buffoons. The gospel would be a real alternative for people to embrace.²⁶

This does not guarantee good arguments will cause people to believe as Craig goes on to say. But it does mean that Christianity would be taken more seriously in the market place of ideas and would not be so easily dismissed and ridiculed.

4. **To refute other opposing worldviews:** Christianity has lost its influence in the world. This is due in large part, as J. P. Moreland notes, to the early nineteenth century withdrawal of the church from the broader intellectual culture. He writes:

This withdrawal from the broader intellectual culture and public discourse contributed to the isolation of the church, the marginalization of Christian ideas from the public arena, and the shallowness and trivialization of Christian living, thought, and activism. In short, the culture became saltless.²⁷

The Christian must return to the public arena where the battle of ideas (worldviews) shapes our society. Apologetics enables the believer to engage the world without acquiescing to it and without compromise (Rom 12:1-2).

5. **Reason demands it:** By reason I mean using all of our faculties to gain knowledge for the purpose of justifying a belief.²⁸ God is a rational, intelligent being with a mind (intellect), will (choice), and emotion (feelings). He has created man with a finite version of these abilities. Man has a mind (Gen 2:19-20), will (Gen 2:16-17), and emotion (Gen 3:10). Therefore, man has a mind to know God, a heart to love God, and a will to obey God.²⁹ And as Geisler has said:

God calls upon his people to use reason (Isa. 1:18) to discern truth from error (1 John 4:6) and right from wrong (Heb. 5:14). A fundamental principle of reason is that it should give sufficient grounds for belief. An unjustified belief is just that—unjustified. . . People deal in two dimensions of belief: **belief that** and **belief in**. *Belief that* gives the evidence and rational basis for confidence needed to establish *belief in*. Once *belief that* is established, one can place faith *in* it. Thus, the rational person wants evidence that God exists before he places his faith in God. Rational unbelievers want evidence that Jesus is the Son of God before they place their trust in him.³⁰

We don't want to be so foolish as to expect non-believers to accept Christianity without a good reason for believing it. Without the ability to do apologetics and give good reasons, we are setting up Christianity to be no more than a blind reasonless faith.

6. **To defeat evil:** Edmund Burke said, "all that was necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing." If good Christian men and women stand idle and fail to defend the absolute and objective nature of the moral law of God, evil will prevail (Gen 6:5; Judges 21:25; Prov 21:2; Jer 17:9). If the secularist worldview of America is to be defeated, Christians must engage in apologetics. If Christians plan on keeping their right to worship, then we must engage in apologetics.

Belief that. Belief that gives the evidence and rational basis for belief in (i.e., I believe that Jesus is the savior for all).

Belief in. Having confidence and faith in (i.e., I put my faith in the finished work of Jesus for my salvation).

--Norman Geisler, Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics

Apologetics for Believers

Most Christians did not come to faith by grand philosophical arguments for the existence of God or by a theological understanding of the Trinity. Most Christians did not understand Christianity as a worldview concept or examine it from the philosophical categories of metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics. Most Christians simply heard the Gospel and responded with childlike faith to the conviction of the Holy Spirit by believing in the Gospel. As Powell notes:

For some, though, apologetics is not discovered until after making a profession of faith. Many Christians did not come to believe as a result of investigating the authority of the Bible, the evidence for the resurrection, or as a response to the philosophical arguments for God's existence. They simply responded to the proclamation of the gospel. Although these people have reasons for their belief, they are deeply personal reasons that often do not make sense to unbelievers. They know the truth but are not necessarily equipped to share or articulate the truth in a way that is understandable to those who have questions about their faith. It is quite possible to believe something is true without having a proper understanding of it or the ability to articulate it.³¹

Now don't misunderstand—faith in Christ is all that is required to be saved (justified). There may be necessary presupposed knowledge that builds on the understanding of the Gospel (belief that), but One does not need the knowledge of apologetic arguments or academically approved philosophical evidence in order for faith in the Christian Worldview to be warranted. The Apostle Paul said, "For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (1 Cor 1:21). What Paul is saying is that it is not just propositional knowledge (belief that) which saves, remember the demons believed

there is one God (James 2:19) but their *belief that* there is one God surely doesn't save them, it is the *belief in*, by way of the conviction and inner witness of the self-authenticating Holy Spirit that acts as the prime and independent source which validates a believer's faith.³² It is the Holy Spirit that gives a believer the certainty of a right relationship with God (Rom 8:15-16). It is the Holy Spirit that convinces a believer of the truths of the Gospel and salvation (1 John 2:20).

It is, likewise, the Holy Spirit that gives a believer the certainty of knowing Jesus abides in them (1 John 3:24; 4:13).³³ None of these things are accomplished by Apologetic arguments but by the Holy Spirit. However, there is a vast difference between **propositional knowledge** (to know facts) and **knowledge by experience** (to know by a personal experience or relationship). The former may be said to be the work of an apologist while the latter is the work of the Holy Spirit. As Geisler notes, "There's a difference between *proving* a proposition and *accepting* a proposition. We might be able to prove Christianity is true beyond reasonable doubt, but only *you* can choose to accept it."³⁴ That is to say, apologetics can prove Christianity is true beyond a reasonable doubt—satisfying the intellectual mind, but apologetics cannot change the will of a person—that is the work of the Holy Spirit. Belief requires more than intellectual knowledge, "belief requires assent not only of the mind but also of the will."³⁵

Propositional Knowledge. Knowledge about facts which equals belief that. You believe that... because you have propositional knowledge of that.

Experiential knowledge. Knowledge gained by relationship which is equal to belief in. You believe in... because you have experiential or relational knowledge of with that.

So, if a deep philosophical and theological understanding is not necessary for salvation, why is it needed after salvation? Or put another way, "if I did not need apologetics to be saved, why do I need apologetics after I am saved?" The following reasons demonstrate the need for apologetics in a believer's life:

1. **Apologetics equips a believer to be the salt and light of the world:** Believers become better witnesses when they are properly equipped. As we have previously noted, "when people learn what they believe and why, they become bold in their witness and attractive in the way they engage others in debate or dialogue."³⁶

Christians who believe but don't know why are often insecure and comfortable only around other Christians. Defensiveness can quickly surface when challenges arise on issues of faith, morality, and truth because of a lack of information regarding the rational grounds for Christianity. At its worst this can lead to either a fortress mentality or a belligerent faith, precisely the opposite of the Great Commission Jesus gave in Matthew 28:19–20. The charge of the Christian is not to withdraw from the world and lead an insular life. Rather, we are to be engaged in the culture, to be salt and light. The solution to this problem is for believers to become informed in doctrine, the history of their faith, philosophy, logic, and other disciplines as they relate to Christianity. They need to know

the facts, arguments, and theology, and understand how to employ them in a way that will effectively engage the culture. In short, the answer is Christian apologetics.³⁷

Likewise, Powell declares:

The results of training in apologetics are boldness, security, and a lack of defensiveness. Apologetics enables the believer to engage the world without acquiescing to it and without compromise.³⁸

In other words, A well-trained Christian will not be defensive about their faith but rather, they will be equipped to give a defense for their faith. A well-trained Christian will not cave to the pressure of the world and lose their identity but rather, they will stand apart as both salt and light for the world (Matt 5:13, Rom 12:1-2).

2. **Apologetics equips believers to become spiritually mature:** A person's behavior is largely determined by what they believe to be true. That is to say, orthodoxy determines orthopraxy. When a believer truly understands their position, their blessings, and the resource given to them (Holy Spirit), they are better equipped to act upon and live out that truth which inevitably leads to Christian maturity (Christ like behavior). Without doctrine, we do not know what to believe and without apologetics, we do not know why to believe the doctrine. The most important part of sanctification is the mind (Rom 12:2). Therefore, apologetics helps equip a believer to move on to spiritual maturity by renewing the mind. Until the Christian has a mind like Christ, he will never have the character of Christ. If we don't think like Christ, we won't act like Christ.
3. **Apologetics can strengthen a believer's faith:** Apologetics can help confirm the faith of a believer (Jude 3). Christians are not exempt from doubt nor from wavering in their faith. This is particularly true for new believers. A new believer is sure to struggle with sin in their life. What do they do when sin rears its ugly head after they have been saved? What do they do when those sinful desires and tendencies reappear one day, two days, or two months after they have been saved? As Craig notes, "emotions will carry you only so far, and then you're going to need something more substantial."³⁹ This is when a Christian is most vulnerable and is quite frankly, why most Christians do not go on to spiritual maturity or usually end up leaving the Church. "Nagging doubt can erode a person's faith."⁴⁰ Mature Christians are to strengthen the lesser (Rom 14-15; 1 Thess 5:11, 14). Apologetics equips a believer to know what they believe, why they believe it, and consistently live out what they believe by overcoming any doubt or lack of faith.
4. **To stop the youth from leaving the church:** It is recorded that 80% of teens leave the church by the time they are in their twenties.⁴¹ The reason most teens leave is because they develop doubts. When those doubts cannot be answered intelligently and rationally by Christians, those kids are lost (usually to secular college professors) to whoever will fill in the blanks for

them and give them the answers they seek. The Church is unfortunately under the impression that faith does not require answering intellectual queries.⁴² “Just have faith” we are told. It is at this point where the catastrophic failure and epic breakdown begins—faith is separated from reason. In short, we have told our youth that Christianity is no more than a blind faith, just accept it rather than looking for rational answers for it. We have failed our youth in large part as Craig notes:

Rather than provide them training in the defense of Christianity’s truth, we focus on emotional worship experiences, felt needs, and entertainment. It’s no wonder they become sitting ducks for that teacher or professor who rationally takes aim at their faith. In high school and college, students are intellectually assaulted with every manner of non-Christian philosophy conjoined with an overwhelming relativism and skepticism.⁴³

If we have any hope at keeping our children grounded in their faith, we must teach apologetics. We must teach them the rationality of Christianity and the overwhelming intellectual superiority it has over all other worldviews. Christianity has all the answers! Therefore, it is not Christianity that does not have the answers—it’s the Christians.

5. To preserve orthodox Christian doctrine:

- a. Paul instructs Titus that an elder should address and correct false doctrine (Titus 1:9-15).
- b. Paul instructs Timothy to guard the faith (1 Tim 1:18-19; 6:20; 2 Tim. 4:2-5).
- c. Paul instructs Timothy that his tool for correcting false doctrine is Scripture (2 Tim 3:16).
- d. Christians are to be aware of false teachings (Rom. 16:17-18; cf. 1 Tim. 1:3-4; 4:16; 2 Tim. 1:13-14; Titus 1:9; 2:1), and to point them out to brothers and sisters in Christ (1 Tim. 4:6).

Summary: The basic definitions of the word *apologia* as used in Scripture, is giving a reason or a defense. The concept of defending the truth of Christianity is prevalent throughout Scripture. A Christian will engage in apologetics at some level if he wishes to be obedient to the commands of Christ. Christianity cannot be lived in a vacuum. It is inevitable that a Christian will come in contact with someone or something that questions or opposes their faith requiring negative apologetics (defense) and likewise, will come in contact with someone needing to hear the gospel requiring positive apologetics (offense). While apologetics will equip one to defend their faith and tear down false accusations against Christianity, the purpose of apologetics is never to win arguments. The purpose is to win lost souls to Christ. It is usually the situation that determines the apologetic role one will play. It is quite often that negative and positive apologetics blends together. A purely negative apologetic only tells someone what they ought not to believe therefore, positive apologetics must be done to tell them what they ought to believe. Christian apologetics is a biblical command. There is both a positive aspect (evangelism) and a negative aspect (defending the truth of Christianity). Apologetics serves a purpose for both the believer (Luke 1:1-14) and the unbeliever (1 Peter 3:15).

Chapter Three

Philosophy of A Worldview

“The basic problem of the Christians in this country in the last eighty years or so, in regard to society and in regard to government, is that they have seen things in bits and pieces instead of totals.”

Francis Schaeffer

Returning now back to the discussion of philosophy. Equipping the Christian to leave the superficial realm of arguing over symptoms, that is, the forgone conclusion one’s worldview leads them to, and prepare to understand the worldview itself. The philosophical categories of metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics are what stands behind one’s beliefs. They are the presuppositions that define why one believes what they believe. Where one starts will determine where one ends.

The word philosophy means “love of wisdom.” The etymology of the word is from the Greek *philo* (to love) and *sophia* (wisdom, intelligence). Philosophy is not just about inquiry. It is a way of inquiring.⁴⁴

Theology

All worldviews have a view of what reality is. Metaphysics is concerned with the ultimate nature, structure, and characteristics of that reality.⁴⁵ Metaphysics begins with a view of God (theology) and no worldview is exempt from this starting point. A worldview either starts with, *God is* (theism), *God is not* (atheism), or *God is all* (pantheism). There is no such thing as a worldview that can remain neutral on the topic of God. There are many views on God however, it is not necessary to know all of them because they all fit into one of the three basic categories provided.

Theism: God is an immaterial infinite—beyond the universe. He is personal, which means He is not a mere force in the universe but rather a personal being with mind, will, and emotion. He is omniscient, omnipotent, sovereign, and good. He is the creator and sustainer of all that is. He created the world *ex nihilo*—it was brought into existence by God out of nothing that preexisted. He is above and beyond the universe but he can act within the universe in a supernatural way.

Atheism: God does not exist beyond the universe or in it. Atheism says the universe is all there is. No god exists anywhere, either in the universe or beyond it. The universe or cosmos is all there is or ever will be. It is self-sustaining.⁴⁶ The universe was created *ex materia*—from preexisting material.

Pantheism: God is the universe. For a pantheist there is no personal creator beyond the universe. God is the universe (or the All) and the universe is God. The universe was created *ex Deo*—from and out of God. Pantheism is represented by certain forms of Hinduism, Zen Buddhism, and the New Age movement.⁴⁷

	THEISM	ATHEISM	PANTHEISM
THEOLOGY	God is	God is not	God is all

Metaphysics

Theology and metaphysics are closely related. As a worldview moves further in its development answering the question of the nature of reality, there are only three choices to choose from. The nature of reality is both material and immaterial (theism) only material (atheism), or only immaterial (pantheism).

Theism: Theism observes reality to be both material and immaterial. That is, the world is materialistic—made of matter, but it is also consist of immaterial things that are not made of matter. Besides the material—atoms and molecules that make up the physical world, there are many things that simply cannot be reduced to a physical material nature. Things such as souls, minds, and thoughts are immaterial by nature. The ultimate immaterial mind (God) created the universe. Therefore God (the immaterial) and the world (the material) exist. Matter came from the mind; mind did not come from matter. God created matter *ex nihilo*—out of nothing, which literally means no-thing (no matter).

Atheism: Atheist believe that matter makes up all of reality. There is no God or immaterial aspect to the world. As the famous atheist astrophysicist Carl Sagan once said, “The Cosmos is all that is or ever was or ever will be.”⁴⁸ For atheist, the cosmos is not composed of two things—matter and mind, or matter and spirit but the cosmos is one thing.⁴⁹ The universe was created *ex material*—out of preexisting material. There was no mind behind the creating of the universe, it is a result of chance and blind forces governed by the physics of nature.

Pantheism: Pantheist see all of reality as immaterial. God is the universe (or the All) and the universe is God. The universe was created *ex Deo*—from and out of God. For most pantheist, the material world is an illusion.

These metaphysical presuppositions form the tracks or start the predetermined course the remainder of the worldview will take.

	THEISM	ATHEISM	PANTHEISM
THEOLOGY	God is	God is not	God is all
METAPHYSICS	Material and immaterial	Material	Immaterial

Epistemology

Epistemology is the third component of a worldview. It deals with knowledge. What can we know and how can we know it? As you will begin to notice, as we analyze worldviews and their presuppositions, the results are often predetermined by what one presupposes about the preceding category. For example, what one presupposes about God (theology) affects their metaphysical view of the nature of reality. If one starts with theism, then the world is dualistic, that is, it is made of both material and immaterial. If one starts with atheism, then the world is monistic and materialism logically follows. Likewise, one's epistemology follows suit. When we are working in the category of epistemology, we are asking not only what can be known but more importantly how. That is, what is available in the world to provide knowledge? Based on what you presuppose both theologically and metaphysically, determines *how* and *what* can be known.

Theism: In the theistic view, God exists as the immaterial mind who created the matter. Thus, reality consists of both the immaterial and the material. So in this worldview, we have a twofold possibility of acquiring knowledge—the immaterial and the material. That is to say, we can learn truth and gain knowledge through God (immaterial) and through creation (material) the physical world that exists around us. There may be knowledge the one can reveal that the other cannot. The Christian view of reality is that it is knowable by means of revelation through:

1. Our five senses – (material) General Revelation (Rom 1:19-20).
2. Human reason – (material) General Revelation (Rom 1:19; Is 1:18)
3. Experiencing the world around us – (material) General revelation (Rom: 1:19-20)
4. The human conscience – (given by immaterial) General Revelation (Rom 1:19)
5. Scripture - Special Revelation (given by the immaterial) (2 Tim 3:16)
6. Jesus Christ -Special Revelation (given by the immaterial) (Heb 1:1-2)

Atheism: Atheism is limited to one source of knowledge based on what it has presupposed about theology and metaphysics. If no God exists and the world is just matter in motion, then knowledge is limited to what the matter can tell us. All knowledge must come from science—the study of the physical and material world. Atheism only allows for knowledge to be gained from:

1. Our five senses
2. Human reason
3. Experiencing the world around us

Pantheism: The pantheist has likewise limited their possibility of gaining knowledge to one source—the immaterial or the spiritual. For the pantheist the material world is an illusion and knowledge can only be gained by becoming one with the immaterial (meditation).

	THEISM	ATHEISM	PANTHEISM
THEOLOGY	God is	God is not	God is all
METAPHYSICS	Material & Immaterial	Material	Immaterial
EPISTEMOLOGY	Knowledge by both the material and immaterial	Knowledge by material only	Knowledge by immaterial only

Ethics

The last component to be discussed is the ethics of a worldview— the study of moral value, right and wrong. Ethics is indeed the logical outworking of the first three presupposed positions. The tracks each worldview is on have already been determined by what is presupposed in the area of theology, metaphysics, and epistemology.

Theism: Based on the theology, metaphysics, and epistemology of the theistic worldview the standard for right and wrong in the universe belongs to the creator and designer of the universe (God). Morality is then determined by His character and nature. Moreover, the one who creates determines the teleology of what they have created. That is to say, the one who creates determines the way in which the created is designed to function. The creator gives purpose to the created that is objective and absolute. To violate that teleology (purpose) is morally wrong.

This brings us back to epistemology. If God is the standard for ethics, how can we know His ethic? How can we know right from wrong? The theistic worldview has already determined that we gain knowledge through both the material and the immaterial therefore we can know right and wrong through:

1. Our five senses – (material) General Revelation (Rom 1:19-20).
2. Human reason – (material) General Revelation (Rom 1:19; Is 1:18)
3. Experiencing the world around us – (material) General revelation (Rom: 1:19-20)
4. The human conscience – (given by immaterial) General Revelation (Rom 1:19)
5. Scripture - Special Revelation (given by the immaterial) (2 Tim 3:16)
6. Jesus Christ -Special Revelation (given by the immaterial) (Heb 1:1 2)

Atheism: The atheist, like the theist must look back to their theology and metaphysics for their foundation of ethics. The atheist has but one choice for the determining factor in their worldview and that is the material. For the atheist there is no immaterial or spiritual entities that exist. The universe is a closed system governed by the laws of physics. So it is simple, mankind is the highest development of this purposeless mechanism of matter and therefore mankind as material is the one who decides right from wrong. Ethics then become autonomous. The humanist manifesto II declares that very thing:

We affirm that moral values derive their source from human experience. Ethics is autonomous and situational, needing no theological or ideological sanction. Ethics stem from human need and interest. To deny this distorts the whole basis of life. Human life has meaning because we create and develop our futures.

The atheist, (based on the logical outworking of their worldview) have arrived at the view they have on homosexuality, gender, marriage, and abortion because mankind, as the most evolved of all the material in the world, gets to decide what is right and wrong good or bad. Right and wrong according to their manifesto is autonomous and situational and it stems from human need and interest. Therefore, there is no such thing as an absolute objective moral standard.

Pantheism: Pantheist believe they must transcend the illusion of good and evil and unite themselves with the ultimate spirit.

	THEISM	ATHEISM	PANTHEISM
THEOLOGY	God is	God is not	God is all
METAPHYSICS	Material & Immaterial	Material	Immaterial
EPISTEMOLOGY	Knowledge by both the material and immaterial	Knowledge by material only	Knowledge by immaterial only
ETHICS	Decided by God	Decided by man	Decided by the immaterial Spirit

Summary: Like we said above, worldviews are the cause of people’s actions. They are the presuppositions that form the value system of life. Theology determines metaphysics. Theology and metaphysics determine epistemology. Theology, metaphysics, and epistemology determine ethics. If any meaningful discussion is to take place between the secularist and the Christian, it must be at the worldview level. The worldview determines why someone believes what they believe. Our goal is to move from the realm of constantly quarreling superficially over effects (what people believe) and move into the realm of thoughtful debate over underlying causes (why they believe). In the next chapters we will begin to determine whose theology, metaphysic, epistemology, and ethic (worldview) is more plausible, the secularist or the Christian.

Chapter Four

Truth

“There are two ways to be fooled. One is to believe what isn't true; the other is to refuse to believe what is true.”

Søren Kierkegaard

What is Truth?

Up until this point we have assumed, there is truth and it is knowable. But now it is time to take a closer look at truth and determine exactly what we mean when we use the word truth. If Christianity is going to claim to have the truth, we had better know what it is.

The Correspondence View of Truth: The correspondence view of truth states that truth is what corresponds to reality. The following defines truth:

- Telling it like it is.
- Corresponds to the facts.
- Matches its object.

If one is telling the truth, it will correspond to reality, such as, the earth is round, you are reading this sentence, Christmas in America is on December 25th. These are all true statements. Contrary, the opposite would be false. Anything that does not, tell it like it is, correspond to the facts, or match its object, is false. Something that misrepresents the facts is false. Something cannot both be true and false at the same time and in the same sense based upon the law of non-contradiction. “A” must be “A” it cannot be both “A” and “non-A” at the same time and in the same sense. The correspondence view of truth cannot be denied without using it. It is a self-defeating statement to say the correspondence view of truth does not exist (just apply the statement to itself). The correspondence view of truth is unavoidable because:

1. Those who deny it assume their view corresponds to reality.
2. In reality everyone holds to a correspondence view of truth.
3. Those who deny it in theory, use it in practice.

Arguments for the correspondence view of truth:

1. It is implied in the ninth commandment, “Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour” (Ex 20:16) (i.e., don’t misrepresent the facts).
2. It is entailed in Acts 24:8-12. The truth can be learned by verifying the facts.
3. It is manifest in Genesis 42:16 “that your words may be proved, whether *there be any* truth in you:” Joseph was going to check the facts to see if his brothers were telling the truth (Facts verify the truth).
4. It was employed in the test for a false prophet whose prophecy was considered false “When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, *if the thing follow not, nor come to pass*, that *is* the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, *but* the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him (Deut. 18:22).
5. Paul implies it when he says that there were five hundred brethren who saw the resurrected Christ (1 Cor 15:6). The five hundred witnesses will tell it like it is.

6. It is essential to a legal oath when one promises “to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.”⁵⁰

The Truth about Truth

Truth is absolute: Truth transcends time, space, and matter. That is to say, if something is true, it is true at all times, it is true in all places, and it is true for all people. If we say, it is an absolute truth that one should not murder an innocent life, then it is true at every point in time, every place in time, and for every person.

Truth is immutable: Truth does not change. Our understanding of truth might change, but the truth does not. Our beliefs about what is true can change but the truth itself can never change.

Truth is discovered not invented: Truth exists regardless of one’s knowledge of it. Gravity existed long before Isaac Newton discovered it and named it. We do not invent truth, we discover truth.

Truth is exclusive: Truth by its very nature excludes all non-truth. $2+2=4$ and nothing else. “4” is the only true answer to the problem and everything in the world that is not “4” is excluded and considered false. If it is true that Christ is the only way to eternal life (John 14:6) then everything in the world that is not Christ is excluded. There cannot be many ways if it is true that there is only one way. Likewise, if it is true that there are many ways, then it is false that there is only one way. All truth excludes its opposite.

Truth is not relative: A relativist believes that truth is subject to time, space, and matter, it is changing or in a process. That is, truth is dependent on such things as the individual, the situation, and or the culture. So, a relativist believes in relative truth and not absolute truth. A relativist would claim there is no absolute truth. However, this is a self-defeating statement. It affirms what it is trying to deny. It is claiming that “truth is relative” but implying that the “relative truth” is absolute. Furthermore, if relativism is true, it is true for everybody everywhere, and that makes it absolute. Finally, if relativism is true, then the statement is meaningless because it is only relative.

Truth is knowable: We can know truth exist by the following:

1. Our five senses - General Revelation (Rom 1:19-20).
2. Human reason - General Revelation (Rom 1:19; Is 1:18)
3. Experiencing the world around us - General revelation (Rom: 1:19-20)
4. The human conscience - General Revelation (Rom 1:19)
5. Scripture - Special Revelation (2 Tim 3:16)
6. Jesus Christ -Special Revelation (Heb 1:1 2)

Truth is absolute and unavoidable. Even the views that deny absolute truth, assume absolute truth and its knowability.

Agnosticism claims, “no one can know the truth,” which is, in fact, claiming to know some truth.

Skepticism claims, “we should doubt everything,” but this assumes to know it is absolute truth that we should doubt everything.

Post-Modernism claims “there is no objective truth,” but this claims to know at least one objective truth.

A premodern baseball umpire would have said something like this: “There’s balls, and there’s strikes and I call ‘em as they are.” The modernist would have said, “There’s balls and there’s strikes, and I call ‘em as I see ‘em.” And the postmodernist umpire would say, “They ain’t nothing until I call ‘em” (quoted in Middleton and Walsh 1995, 132-33). In brief, all reality is subject dependent. The postmodernist frames reality by naming aspects at his or her whim.⁵¹

Chapter Five

Belief

*“I believe in Christianity as I believe that the sun has risen,
not only because I see it,
but because by it I see everything”*

C. S. Lewis

Why do People Believe What They do?

The average day is filled with unconscious beliefs that routinely go unopposed such as, when the alarm clock goes off in the morning, one believes it really is 6:00 a.m. This belief, in turn, presupposes a deeper belief that there exists such a thing as time and a clock accurately measures it. When we say, “I will meet you at such and such time,” we never give these beliefs a second thought. We believe repeatedly on what could be called foundational beliefs (presuppositions) and remain unaware we are doing so. It is usually the case that unless our beliefs are directly challenged, we would never consider to question why we believe what we believe. Everything we do is predicated on belief and beliefs can be evaluated.

Why do people believe what they do? The logical answer would be that people believe what they believe based on justifiable truth claims. That is, truth that is supported by evidence. Surprisingly, this is not the case. As Blaise Pascal has observed, “People almost invariably arrive at their beliefs not on the basis of proof but on the basis of what they find attractive.”⁵² This is not only true for the practical activities of an average day; it is also true when choosing a philosophical worldview or a religion. However, when choosing either, one should ask themselves, “do I have good reasons to believe what I believe?” When we are dealing with “believing in” and “believing that,” belief becomes the kind of things that are true or false⁵³

Belief: People almost invariably arrive at their beliefs not on the basis of proof but on the basis of what they find attractive.

-- Blaise Pascal

Philosophy: The branch of study that finds truth through logic, evidence, and science.

Below is a chart categorizing the reasons why people believe what they believe. People believe what they believe based on four categories: sociological, psychological, religious, and philosophical.⁵⁴

Sociological Reasons	Psychological Reasons	Religious Reasons	Philosophical Reasons
Parents Friends Society Culture Teacher School Tradition Government (Everyone else is doing it so it must be true)	Comfort Feelings Emotions Experience Peace of mind Meaning Purpose Hope Identity Pride/rebellion	Scripture Pastor/Priest Guru Rabbi Church Imam	Evidence Consistency Coherence Explanatory Power (Best explanation of all the evidence)

James Sire notes three things about belief:

1. Any teaching—religious or otherwise—is worth trusting only if it points to the truth. Apathy about truth can be dangerous. In fact, believing error can have deadly consequences, both temporally and—if any one of a number of religious teachings are true—eternally as well.
2. Many beliefs that people hold today are not supported by evidence, but only by the subjective preferences of those holding them. As Pascal said, people almost invariably arrive at their beliefs not on the basis of proof but on the basis of what they find attractive. But truth is not a subjective matter of taste—it’s an objective matter of fact.
3. In order to find truth, one must be ready to give up those subjective preferences in favor of objective facts. And facts are best discovered through logic, evidence, and science.⁵⁵

Putting Sire to the test

Are all reasons good reasons to believe something?

According to Sire, “Any teaching—religious or otherwise—is worth trusting only if it points to the truth.” This would mean that trusting something based on pure sociological, psychological, or religious reasons may lead a person to believe in something that is not true. Moreover, it may lead them to danger, injury, or damnation. That is to plainly say, reality demonstrates that there are consequences to being wrong. Christians and all seekers of truth alike must ensure they have adequate justification for believing what they believe. Below are examples of why truth cannot be based on society, psychology, and religion alone.

Why Believe Anything? Any teaching—religious or otherwise—is worth trusting only if it points to the truth.

-- James Sire

Sociological reasons: It does not matter if one's family, friends, community, society or culture has adopted something as true and worthy behavior. Why? Family and friends, although they might be sincere, can be sincerely wrong. They can sincerely believe in and worship a giant spaghetti monster as their God. No evidence exists to prove there is such a thing as a giant spaghetti monster but yet some people hold this to be true. Don't believe me, google the church of the flying spaghetti monster or go to www.venganza.org, and You will soon see that this is a bona fide real religion. Not only that, for a mere twenty-five dollars, you can become ordained as a Pastafarian minister. This may be trivial but on a more serious note, what if family and friends believed it was ok to drink poison. All of the followers of Jim Jones who on November 18, 1978, drank poison under coercion died. Of the 918 victims (304) were minors.⁵⁶ Family and friends cannot be the ultimate test for believing something is true because they often get it wrong. There

are many sincere families who are Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, Atheist, Mormon, and Jehovah's Witnesses who all claim to have the truth.

To accept something because your community, society, culture, or government has adopted it as true is no better of a reason. Why? The Nazis had a culture that accepted the murder of Jews. Clearly, it is not true that it is ok to murder people based on their ethnicity. Believing something is true based on sociological reasons can prove to be fatal. It should never be the evidence (in and of itself) one looks for to find the truth. It would not only be naïve; it would be irrational to make a society or culture the standard of truth. We do not determine truth by counting noses. That is to say, just because everybody is doing it, does not make it right. Therefore, sociological reasons alone are inadequate in determining truth because societies are often wrong and if something is wrong or not true, we should not believe it.

Psychological reasons: Feelings or emotions are a very inconsistent and unreliable source for truth. Why? Feelings are subjective and they often change. Anything that is in a constant state of change cannot be the foundation for immutable objective truth. Likewise, do the feelings of a liar, adulterer, thief, child molester, or murderer, justify their actions? Despite the clichés that are often spouted out when giving advice, “just do what you feel is right,” or “follow your heart,” feelings are not the standard for truth. Would it be advantageous to tell a murderer, “Just do what you feel is right,” or a child molester, “do what makes you comfortable?” Therefore, psychological reasons alone are inadequate in determining truth because feelings are often wrong and moreover, our feelings are often controlled by our depraved sin nature.

Religious reasons: Religion is not always a good test for truth. If one follows the teachings of a preacher, priest, or guru the question becomes why do they believe what they believe. What if they believe what they believe based on sociological or psychological reasons alone? If they believe what they believe based on Scripture, this begs the question who's Scripture? All religious books are not equal. If one book teaches something as to be true and another teaches the opposite to be true, they both cannot be true. Geisler offers the following illustration:

the Bible and the Qur'an, for example, can't both be true because they contradict one another. The Bible says that Jesus died on the cross and rose three days later (1 Cor. 15:1–8), while the Qur'an says he existed but didn't die on the cross (Sura 4:157). If one's right, the other one is wrong. Then again, if Jesus never existed, both of them are wrong.⁵⁷

Moreover, Hitler read Scripture and determined for himself that his actions were justified. He said in his book *Mein Kampf*, “Hence today I believe that I am acting in accordance with the Almighty Creator: by defending myself against the Jew, I am fighting for the work of the Lord.” Believing in something that is pure evil can never be justified by placing it under the auspice of religion.

Therefore, religious reasons alone are inadequate in determining truth because religions are often wrong.

So is there a category outside of sociology, psychology, and religion that one can test their beliefs against, the answer is yes, the philosophical category.

Philosophical reasons: Philosophy is the branch of study that finds truth through logic, evidence, and science.⁵⁸ Remember, we are defining philosophy as the discipline which finds evidence, consistency, coherence, explanatory power, and the best explanation of all the evidence. This then becomes the best reason to believe anything. Our beliefs should be rooted in objective facts rather than subjective feelings. Therefore, it is rational to believe in the Bible not because of sociological, psychological, or religious reasons but because of the philosophical evidence that supports it. The Bible is worth believing if it is rational, if it is supported by evidence, and if it best explains all the data?⁵⁹ The Bible is worth believing only if it is true. Does this mean we place philosophy over the Bible? No. However, all truth is God's truth and if something is true, philosophy will discover and affirm that truth not disagree with it (truth matches reality, non-truth does not). We discover truth but God determines truth. Philosophy exists because God exist. Logic simply means, to reason correctly and to reason logically is to reason correctly—after the way God reasons. Correct reasoning allows us to discover the truth of the Bible.

Summary: One should only believe what is true. Non-truth and wrong beliefs can often hurt a person. Everyone ought to have good philosophical reasons to believe in what they believe in. If A person believes in a thing such as gravity, they should not believe it based on sociological reasons (i.e., everyone else believes it), they should not believe it based on psychological reasons (i.e., feelings), nor should they believe it for religious reasons (i.e., the religion you follow says so). One should believe in gravity first and foremost by the evidence that exists to support it. Everyone is experiencing the effects of gravity right now. It can be tested and verified. All objects dropped on earth fall at a rate of 9.8 meters per second. Therefore, one is justified in their belief that there exists a natural phenomenon (called gravity) that by which all things with mass are brought together. In fact, to deny this truth would be irrational. The same is true for Christianity. The Bible is worth believing because of the philosophical reasons. The logic, evidence, consistency, coherence, explanatory power and the mere common sense that humans possess prove it is true.

Belief

Christians are often accused of having a blind faith or at best an irrational faith. This is not the case. “Christianity is not simply personal preference, a function of how one was raised, or a worldview supported only by emotional considerations.”⁶⁰ Christianity is a relationship, based on evidence. To believe in God and the validity of the Bible is very rational. On the contrary, to put your faith in anything else as ultimate reality would prove to be a blind faith or at best an irrational faith. This is the case with most atheists. They believe in scientific theories that reveal no evidence and have never been proven to be true. As it has been said, “Faith is only valid as the object in which it is placed.”⁶¹ The evidence or the object that faith is placed in then becomes the foundation for faith as Powell has noted:

A claim is not true just because we believe it or untrue because we don't believe it. First, we assess the evidence and reasons for its truth. Next, we weigh the evidence to determine how well supported these claims are. Finally, we trust; we exercise faith based on the weight of the evidence. Faith is not Christian-branded hoping or wishing. Those who embrace other belief systems incompatible with Christianity will often follow this same process. The difference comes down to how each assesses the evidence for its position as well as others. Faith is the product of investigation and deliberation, and reason is its grounding and its backbone, not its enemy.⁶²

The apostle Paul follows this pattern of thinking. He has declared that everyone who does not believe God exists is without an excuse. Why? Because God has revealed Himself (gave evidence) to all people in three ways: first, through the consequences of evil, second, through our conscience, and finally, through creation.

For the [wrath of God is revealed](#) from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the **truth** in unrighteousness; Because that which may be **known** of God is [manifest in them](#); for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him [from the creation of the world](#) are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: (Romans 1:18-20 cf. 2:14-15).

Paul has declared that through nature there are at least three witnesses that testify to the existence of God:



1. The witness of consequences. “wrath of God is revealed” (1:18).
2. The witness of conscience. “Manifest in them” (1:19 cf. 2:14-15)
3. The witness of creation. “creation” (1:20).

In order to refuse to believe in God, one has to suppress the truth that has been revealed to them through nature (natural revelation). For this reason, the problem has never been a lack of evidence; the problem has always been a refusal to believe the evidence. Moreover, in addition to the evidence from nature, there is also the drawing of the Holy Spirit (John 6:44; 12:32). As William Lane Craig has rightly concluded:

Therefore, when a person refuses to come to Christ, it is never just because of lack of evidence or because of intellectual difficulties: at root, he refuses to come because he willingly ignores and rejects the drawing of God's Spirit on His heart. No one in the final analysis really fails to become a Christian because of lack of arguments: he fails to become a Christian because he loves darkness rather than light and wants nothing to do with God.⁶³

The material below explains how people react to evidence. One believes something to be true:

1. In spite of the evidence – **Unreasonable Faith**
2. With no evidence – **Blind Faith**
3. Because of the evidence – **Rational Faith**

Unreasonable Faith	Blind Faith	Rational Faith
 <p data-bbox="241 615 631 646">Believing in spite of the evidence</p> <p data-bbox="203 737 656 1014">It is irrational and unwarranted to believe in something when the evidence clearly refutes the truth of one's belief. For example, to believe that the earth is flat in spite of the evidence that proves it is round would be unreasonable faith.</p> <p data-bbox="203 1066 660 1178">Unreasonable or irrational faith results from believing in something that is false.</p> <p data-bbox="203 1230 613 1423">Note: Jesus never ask anybody to believe something in spite of the evidence. He never asks anyone to ignore the evidence or believe in something that is not true.</p> <p data-bbox="203 1476 641 1627">The Christian faith is not an irrational faith that believes in spite of the evidence. It is a faith that believes because of the evidence.</p>	 <p data-bbox="704 615 1021 646">Believing with no evidence</p> <p data-bbox="704 737 1073 1056">It is irrational and unwarranted to believe in something when no evidence exists to support one's belief. For example, to believe that aliens brought a life form to earth that evolved into humans is a blind faith. No evidence exists to support it.</p> <p data-bbox="704 1108 1052 1178">Note: Jesus never ask anyone to believe without evidence.</p> <p data-bbox="704 1230 1078 1341">The Christian faith is not a blind faith. It is a faith built on the evidence from:</p> <ul data-bbox="753 1352 1060 1808" style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation • Conscience/morals • Soul/immaterial • Science • Fulfilled Prophecy • Miracles • Resurrection of Christ • History • Archeology • Indwelling of the Holy Spirit 	 <p data-bbox="1167 615 1458 684">Believing because of the evidence</p> <p data-bbox="1115 737 1492 972">It is rational, civil, and moral to believe something is true based on the evidence. Our very own jurisprudence system is based on rational belief that is warranted by the evidence.</p> <p data-bbox="1115 1024 1479 1136">Note: Jesus expects one to believe His teachings based on the evidence.</p> <p data-bbox="1115 1188 1472 1381">The Christian faith is based on the existence of an overwhelming amount of evidence (John 5:36; 14:11; 10:37-38; 20:30-31).</p>

Looking at the Options

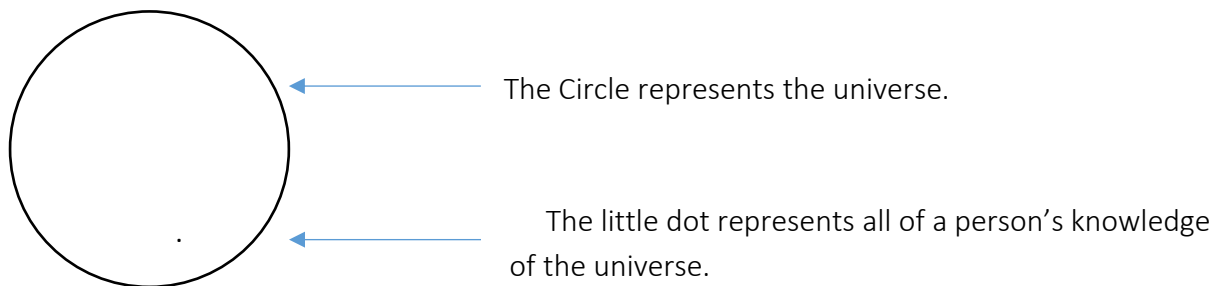
Theist- A theist believes that a self-existing, all-powerful, all-knowing, all-loving, sovereign, supernatural being exists who created the world and everything in it. This reality is knowable (Rom 1:18-20). Christians believe this to be true *because of the evidence*, this makes Christianity a *rational faith*.

Atheist – An atheist denies the reality of a God or Gods, mainly a theistic God. They believe no supernatural God exists and moreover, there is no possibility that one could exist. Atheist believe there is no God *in spite of the evidence* that demonstrates there is a God (Rom 1:18-20), this makes Atheism an *unreasonable faith*.

Agnostic – An agnostic believes it cannot be known if a God exist. An agnostic will neither affirm nor deny that God exist. Some agnostics will say they don't know, and others will claim it can't be known. Agnostics have *no evidence* to determine God cannot be known so agnosticism is a *blind faith*.

Looking at the truth claims that are being made by each group above, we can see that the atheist has made an irrational conclusion. The atheist is making a claim that a finite person can have infinite knowledge.

If we were to draw a circle which was representative of the whole universe and ask the atheist how much knowledge of the universe he possesses, if he were honest, he would have to say very little compared to all the truth and knowledge that exist throughout the universe. It would look something like the diagram below.



Now based on the atheist own admission, he knows very little about the universe. It would be irrational to conclude with any certainty that God does not exist outside of the atheist limited knowledge. This should at minimum, force the atheist to agree that there is a possibility that God could exist. By the simple illustration above, an atheist, someone who claims to know God does not exist, can quickly be changed to an agnostic, someone who claims not to know if God exist. After an atheist has changed to an agnostic, the only task left for the Christian is to provide the agnostic with some evidence for the existence of God. The tables can quickly be turned by demonstrating rational arguments. The Christian should always be ready to provide the evidence (1 Peter 3:15).

An agnostic can be answered in a different manner with a slightly different tactic. An agnostic believes that one cannot truly know if God exist. By the agnostic claiming not to know anything about God, is indeed claiming to know something about God. Consider the following quotes:

Now if the religious skeptic is right, we can know nothing about God. And if we can know nothing about God, how can we know God so well that we can know that he cannot be known? How can we know that God cannot and did not reveal himself—perhaps even through human reason?⁶⁴

To say that we cannot know anything about God is to say something about God; it is to say that if there is a God, he is unknowable. But in that case, he is not entirely unknowable, for the agnostic certainly thinks that we can know one thing about him: That nothing else can be known about him.” In the end, agnosticism is an illogical position to hold to.⁶⁵

By pointing out the agnostic's fallacy of a self-defeating statement. We can demonstrate to an agnostic that something can be known about God. The only question left for the Christian apologist to ask the agnostic is, do you want to know more about God?

Apologetic Note: It is a mistake to think you know what someone believes just because of a label. It is also a mistake to think that we as Christians have to bear the burden of proof, know everything, and provide all the answers. Asking questions often gets the best results. A question has a way of probing to the heart of a belief. A question exposes the foundation by which a worldview is built on. It forces a person to think critically. Often times, it is trying to answer a question when a person realizes they have hung their belief on nothing. There are four fundamental questions that a Christian should master.⁶⁶

1. **What do you mean by that?** Most arguments fail to come to a conclusion because the two parties are not arguing about the same thing. If the definition of a word is not clearly defined, then a rational argument cannot take place. Take for instance, the terms God, Scripture, and salvation. These are the most important words in any religious discussion. Do not assume that everyone understands these terms to mean the same thing. Do not attempt to argue your case without first asking, “what do you mean by that?”
2. **How do you know that is true?** This probing question will unveil their source of knowledge. As we have seen previously, people believe things to be true for many reasons. This is where you will find Pascal to be correct when he said, “People almost invariably arrive at their beliefs not on the basis of proof but on the basis of what they find attractive.” By asking this question it will become evident that when people hold a view opposed to Christianity, they often do not have good reasons for believing it. Most beliefs are based on sociological, psychological, or religious reasons alone. Christians and non-Christians alike carry the burden to know what they believe and why they believe it. This question then puts the Christian and the non-Christian on an even playing field.

3. **Where did you get that information?** Truth claims should not just be accepted; they should be supported by strong evidence. This question reveals the source of their information (good, bad, or non-existent).
4. **What happens if your wrong?** Ideas have consequences. There is always a price to pay for being wrong. Sometimes that price is eternal. Everyone should strongly consider the logical outcome if what they hold to be true ends up being false.

Chapter Six

The Christian Worldview

“The strength of the Christian system — the acid test of it — is that everything fits under the apex of the existent, infinite-personal God, and it is the only system in the world where this is true. No other system has an apex under which everything fits. That is why I am a Christian and no longer an agnostic. In all the other systems, something 'sticks out,' something cannot be included; and it has to be mutilated or ignored. But without losing his own integrity, the Christian can see everything fitting into place beneath the Christian apex of the existence of the infinite-personal God who is there.”

Francis A. Schaeffer

Worldviews: A Difference in Beliefs

Everyone believes something to be true, and everyone has a set of basic beliefs by which they live their lives. That is, a set of fundamental beliefs about the most basic of things concerning the world we live in:

1. **Origin** – where did I come from?
2. **Meaning** – why am I here?
3. **Morality** – what is right and what is wrong?
4. **Destiny** – where am I going?

A worldview is formed by a commitment to the answers of the four questions. It is not only Christianity that forms a specific view of these basic questions of life, but every worldview answers these questions. A worldview is something everyone has. It shapes one's life and controls behavior. Some people are aware of the worldview they prescribe to and try diligently to live according to it. On the other hand, others are unaware and unwittingly living out a view, never have given a second thought to its implications.

A worldview is often portrayed as a set of glasses one views the world through. Looking through a set of glasses with red lenses gives a different perspective than looking through a set of glasses with green lenses. Similarly, people holding different worldviews will see life, death, and everything in between from different perspectives. The answers become the basis or shall we say, glasses, from which one will view the world through. When faced with a decision or question in life, a person's subconscious reverts to the answers of the four questions to act on it or make a reply. It is the worldview that affects the decision making and day-to-day behavior of a person.

So, what exactly is a worldview? A worldview in its simplest form is a way a person views the world in which he or she lives. Formal definitions are:

- A worldview is a way of viewing or interpreting all of reality. It is an interpretive framework through which or by which one makes sense out of the data of life and the world.⁶⁷
- A worldview is a commitment, a fundamental orientation of the heart, that can be expressed as a story or in a set of presuppositions (assumptions which may be true, partially true or entirely false) that we hold (consciously or subconsciously, consistently or inconsistently) about the basic constitution of reality, and that provides the foundation on which we live and move and have our being.⁶⁸
- A worldview is a conceptual scheme or intellectual framework by which a person organizes and interprets experience. More specifically, a worldview is a set of beliefs, values, and presuppositions concerning life's most fundamental issues.⁶⁹

- A worldview is the total of answers people give to the most important questions in life. According to some, the five most important elements in any worldview are what people believe about God, ultimate reality, knowledge, ethics, and human nature.⁷⁰

Atheism

An Atheist is one who believes that God does not exist. There is no supernatural being or cause for the universe. An atheist believes that everything in the universe can be described by nature (natural causes).

Let's consider the answers to the four questions that will classify one as an atheist. If one believes the **origin** of life is a result of time + chance + matter (natural causes), then the only **meaning** and **morality** that can exist are what human beings autonomously prescribe them to be. There can be no real purpose in life. Man is mortal and to cease to exist is the only **destiny** possible. No matter what decision in life that is before an atheist, the answers to the big questions (their worldview), will be the deciding factor. They will view the world through atheistic glasses.

Christianity

A Christian worldview, on the other hand, answers the big questions differently. A Christian understands the **origin** of everything is dependent on a Supernatural Creator (God), and man is made in His image. The **meaning** of life is to glorify God and fulfill the purpose for which we were designed, while **morals**—the supreme standards of what is good and evil, are determined by His character. Because of the sin of Adam, all human beings are born in a fallen state in need of a savior. **Destiny** is everlasting life. This is the set of glasses a Christian sees the world through and likewise, will base their decisions and behavior on. In short, an atheist will live their lives based upon the temporal and the Christian on the eternal.

The two different worldviews will view matters such as theology, philosophy, biology, psychology, ethics, sociology, law, politics, economics, and history differently.⁷¹ Worldviews can be so drastically different on such matters that one might say; they are coming from two separate "worlds." Therefore, both could be looking at the same facts but come to different conclusions.⁷² An application from Scripture should be considered.

Rom 12:2 "And be not conformed to [this world](#): but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

There are two worldviews in contrast here "this world" against the biblical Christian worldview. Paul is warning Christians against the influences of the "worldly system." A Christian must live his life consistently within the framework of the biblical Christian worldview careful not to borrow from the incorrect foundation of the "worldly system."

Summary of a Worldview

- A worldview is a set of beliefs that form the way a person views the world he or she lives in.
- A worldview is formed by the answers to the basic questions of life.
- A person will perceive the world based on their worldview.
- Worldviews control behavior.
- Worldviews are fundamentally different.

The Christian Worldview

Christianity, despite the charges of being mystical, unintelligent, and based on fairytales, is quite the opposite. The Christian worldview is a comprehensive, coherent, and consistent view of all of reality. It speaks to every area of life. It is knowable, rational, experiential, and capable of being lived out. This is what sets it apart and makes it far superior to any other world view. Within the Christian worldview there is a constant never-changing truth which provides an absolute moral standard. Truth and morality are not subject to time, location, or person. If truth and morality were subject to time, location, or person, it would make it impossible to live consistently within the frame work of this worldview. It would be ever-changing and chaotic.

The Christian Worldview describes the world we live in by the following:

Reality/Philosophy (Metaphysics)

The Christian Worldview understands all of reality to be both immaterial and material. The universe consists of both nature (the creation) and the supernatural (the Creator).

God/Theology

The Christian view says that God is the supernatural who created the universe and everything in it.

- God is Spirit- He is an indivisible spirit being (John 4:24).
- God is a Trinity- He is one in essence, but three in persons. All three-Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are co-eternal and co-equal. (Matt 28:19; Rom 1:7; Heb 1:8; Acts 5:3-4).
- God is self-existent - He exists in and of Himself independent of anything else. (Ex 3:14; John 5:26).
- God is a necessary being - It is impossible for Him to not exist (Col 1:16).
- God is eternal - He is nontemporal, timeless (Ps 90:2; John 17:5; Titus 1:2; Jude 25).
- God is omnipotent - He is all powerful (Gen 17:1; Exod 6:3; 2 Cor 6:18).
- God is omniscient' He is all knowing (Acts 15:18; Ps 147:4; 139:16; Matt 11:21).

- God is omnipresent - He is everywhere present (Ps 139:7-12).
- God is personal - He is a personable being with mind will and emotion (Gen 1:26).
- God is sovereign -All of creation is under His control (Col 1:16).
- God is immutable - He does not change (Mal 3:6).

Knowledge/Philosophy (Epistemology)

The Christian view of reality is that it is knowable by means of revelation through:

7. Our five senses - General Revelation (Rom 1:19-20).
8. Human reason - General Revelation (Rom 1:19; Is 1:18)
9. Experiencing the world around us - General revelation (Rom: 1:19-20)
10. The human conscience - General Revelation (Rom 1:19)
11. Scripture - Special Revelation (2 Tim 3:16)
12. Jesus Christ -Special Revelation (Heb 1:1 2)

Biology

The Christian view understands all of life to be highly complex. The design or specified complexity (DNA) found in life points to an intelligent designer (God). The Christian worldview affirms the scientific principle that life comes from life. Non-life can never give rise to life. Therefore, life came from the living supernatural (God, Gen 1:1). He created life, and it has reproduced after its kind ever since (Gen 1:12, 24, 28). There is no biological (scientific) evidence to support life ever coming from non-life.

Psychology

The Christian view of the human being is that humans are dualistic in nature (Gen 2:7). Humans are made up of material (physical body) and immaterial (soul). The soul (*psyche*) is something different than the body. The soul is the immaterial part of a person. The soul is the site of all the psychological faculties such as heart, mind, and soul, as referred to in Scripture. Moreover, humans are made in the image of their Creator (God) (Gen 1:26-27). The first humans were created morally upright with no sin nature (Gen 2:25). Because of their disobedience to the Creator, the nature of humans was changed forever (Gen Ch. 3). Humans now have a sin nature that contrasts with the perfect will of the Creator. For this reason, humans are not inherently good they are inherently sinful (Rom 3:23). The solution to the sinful nature of mankind can only be overcome by the provisions the Creator has made possible—belief in the work of Jesus Christ (John 3:16).

Ethics

The Christian view recognizes the absolute standard for right and wrong in the universe is grounded in the character of the Creator of the universe (God). The standard is not subjective in any way, but rather it is objective and binding on everyone everywhere. God has revealed His standard of right and wrong to mankind through four ways:

1. Through the natural world - General Revelation (Rom 1:20)
2. Through the human conscience - General Revelation (Rom 1:19; 2:14-15)
3. Through Scripture - Special Revelation (Deut 29:29)
4. Through Jesus Christ - Special Revelation (John 1:14-18; Heb 1:1-2)

Sociology

The Christian view understands that every human being is created in the image of God and the value of every person rest solely on being created in God's image. Every person has intrinsic value based on the kind of thing they are (human). Part of being created in God's image means that humans are relational and social. The relationships and social structure humans have developed were not formed from animal instincts of survival; they were formed by the Creator. God has ordained three social institutes where relationship's function. These institutes are not man-made but God ordained:

- Family- A married couple (male and female) father, mother, and child. This institution is the foundation of civilization, designed to nurture children both spiritually and physically (Gen 2:22-24; Deut 6:4-9;20-21; Joshua 4:4-7; Eph 5:24-25; 6:4).
- Church - Designed to continue the spiritual maturation of the family as well as minister to the needs of the community (Rom 12:4-5; 1 Cor 12:12-14, 27; Col 1:18).
- State - Designed to protect the people and their God-given rights (Gen 9:6; Rom 13:1-4; 1 Tim 2:1-4).

Economics

The Christian view recognizes the duty to work, stewardship of property, and the right to private property.

- People are to work for their money (Prov 10:4-5).
- We are to be good stewards of all we have (Gen 1:28; 1 Peter 4:10).
- The ownership of private property is a God-given privilege.

The eighth commandment implies the ownership of property "thou shall not steal" (Ex 20:15). Deut 5:21 also implies the right to private property and justice to those who attempt to take it wrongfully.

Law/Politics

The Christian view recognizes what is called natural law. "Natural law is understood as the usual, orderly, and general way the world operates."⁷³ It has been revealed by God through general revelation (Rom 1: 19-20; 2:14-15). Christians recognize law in three areas:

1. Physical Law - Can be seen in the law of gravity or thermodynamics. These laws are the laws in which govern the physical universe that God set into place upon creation
2. Moral Law - An innate reality that is present in all of mankind. That is to say, everyone intuitively knows right from wrong. It is woven into our conscience and our very fabric of life (Rom 1: 19-20; 2:14-15).
3. Civil Law-A law instituted by God (Gen 9:6). Christians recognize civil law as:
 - a. Being divinely appointed (Rom 13; 1-4)
 - b. Those who resist, resist God (13:2a)
 - c. Resisters will be judged (13:2b)
 - d. Having a divine purpose (Rom 13: 3-4)
 - e. Praise to those who do good (13:3-4)
 - f. Punishment to evil doers (13: 4)

History

The Christian view of history is that it is linear, that is to say; it is moving forward toward a goal. God has a plan for the end, and all of history is moving toward it. History is not circular; it had a beginning, and it will have an end (Rev 22:13)

Chapter Seven

What Role Does Logic Play in Apologetics?

*“Logic takes care of its self, all we have to do is to look and see how it
does it.”*

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Logic

Man was created in the image of God to be His image bearers (Gen 1:26). We were created for the purpose of glorifying God. What this means is there are some transferable aspects of God's character or nature that He has endowed man with. There are five ways in which man is made in the image and likeness of God.

1. **Spiritual image and likeness** – Man has a spirit (Gen 1:27) which allows him to relate to God in a special way. Through the spirit man has the ability to worship and fellowship with God.
2. **Mental image and likeness** – God is a rational intelligent being with mind (intellect), will (choice), and emotion (feelings). He has created man with a finite version of these abilities. Man has mind (Gen 2:19-20), will (Gen 2:16-17), and emotion (Gen 3:10). Moreover, man has the mental capacity to know God by reason (Is 1:18) and the ability to love God with a mind (Matt 22:37).
3. **Moral image and likeness** – God is a perfect moral being, He is holy and righteous. He has created man with an innate ability to know right from wrong. That is to say, man has a built-in moral compass (conscience) to guide him (Rom 1:18-19; 2:14-15).
4. **Social image and likeness** – God is a social being (John 17:5, 24). He has a relational nature within the Trinity (Gen 1:26). God ordained three social institutes for man:
 - a. Family - A married couple (male and female) father, mother, and child. This institution is the foundation of civilization, designed to nurture children both spiritually and physically (Gen 2:22-24; Deut 6:4-9; 20-21; Joshua 4:4-7; Eph 5:24-25; 6:4).
 - b. Church - Designed to continue the spiritual maturation of the family as well as minister to the needs of the community (Rom 12:4-5; 1 Cor 12:12-14, 27; Col 1:18).
 - c. State - Designed to protect the people and their rights (Gen 9:6; Rom 13:1-4; 1 Tim 2:14).
5. **Immortal image and likeness** – God created man with an immortal spirit. The spiritual aspect of a person will never cease to exist.

Since God is a rational being, He would not demand us to do something that is irrational. He would not tell us to use reason if we did not have the ability to do it. Thus, we can determine that God is a rational being, and He created us with the ability to be rational beings as well.

Faith does not only require the spiritual aspect of a person; it requires the mental as well (Matt 22:37). Scripture clearly indicates that God gave us the ability to reason. Peter tells us to be ready

to give a “reason” for the hope that is in us (1 Peter 3:15). Isaiah pleaded with Israel to reason, and Paul maintains that discipleship requires one to renew their mind (Rom 12:2), which means to put things in their proper order.

The tool by which we reason is called logic. Logic helps us order our thoughts so that we may come to a correct conclusion. Logic simple helps us discover the truth. People use logic every day, even if they do not realize they are using it. One uses logic to manage time, money, and almost all daily decisions. “The light is red, when people run red lights, accidents usually happen, I will wait until the light turns green.” Good logic! “All men are mortal, mortal men die, I am a mortal man, I will never die.” Bad logic! The use of logic is undeniable. In fact, in order to try and deny logic you have to use logic. If you say, “logic does not exist” the question is, “did you use logic to come to that conclusion?” Of course you did. Logic is undeniable and unavoidable. By denying it, you affirm it. That is, in order to deny logic, you have to use logic. Everyone uses logic; it is just that some are better at it than others.

Logic. Logic is a way to think so that we can come to correct conclusion by understanding implications and the mistakes people often make in thinking.

--Geisler and Brooks

Logic is built on four undeniable self-evident and self-explanatory laws. They are fundamental to all thought and give order to the universe. The world would be chaotic with no way to effectively communicate without them. These laws are: law of non-contradiction, the law of identity, the law of excluded middle, and the law of rational inference.⁷⁴

1. Law of non-contradiction: (A is not non-A) “A” cannot equal “A” and equal “non-A” (1 Tim 6:20). This law says that no two contradictory statements can both be true at the same time and in the same sense. More plainly, this means, true is not the same as false and false is not the same as true (Matt 5:37). Either you are reading these words right now, or you aren’t. You cannot be reading and not reading at the same time. The law of non-contradiction simply says opposites cannot both be true at the same time and in the same sense. Consider the statements below.

Jesus Christ is God-----Jesus Christ is not God

Obviously, the two statements cannot both be true because they are making two different opposite apposing truth claims. Not only can they not both be true but if there is a Jesus and a God, both statements cannot be false either. One statement must be true, and one must be false because they are claiming the opposite of each other. Consider another set of statements.

Jesus is the only way to heaven-----There are many ways to heaven

These statements clearly violate the law of non-contradiction. If Jesus is the “only” way, then there cannot be “many” ways. The two statements are teaching opposite truths. They cannot both be true. Logic demands that one statement is true, and the other is false.

We have no problem with the law of non-contradiction in matters such as money or medicine, “five dollars is not the same as ten dollars,” and “to have cancer is not the same thing as to not have cancer.” But we cannot choose where the law of non-contradiction starts and stops (that itself is a violation of the law). We must apply the logic to religious matters as well. What could be more important than life and eternity? If Christianity is true, anything opposed to Christianity is false.

2. Law of excluded middle: (either A or non-A) Something either is or it isn’t (Matt 12:30; 22:41-46). The law of excluded middle excludes a third class to exist between the law of non-contradiction. Something is either true or false, there is no middle category. It is one or the other. Consider the examples again.

Jesus Christ is God-----Jesus Christ is not God

Only two options exist with these statements—true or false—no middle option. Either Jesus is God or He is not.

Jesus is the only way to heaven-----There are many ways to heaven

It is one or the other no middle option. If Jesus is the only way there are not many ways and if there are many ways than Jesus cannot be the only way. It is either or with no possibility of a third option.

3. Law of identity: (A is A) The law of identity says that a thing is what it is (John 6:35). When something is identified as such, it is identical to itself and opposite from all other things. This must be established to even begin to speak intelligently. A chair is a chair and not a refrigerator. A chair is a chair based upon the essence of the chair. The chair has characteristics that make it a chair and not something else. A chair is a chair. The law of identity allows us to properly categorize things. We could not have rational conversations without assuming the law of identity. Consider the statement below again.

-----Jesus Christ is God-----

If “A” and “B” are identical, then they are really the same thing. There is only one thing not two. Any truth that applies to “A” applies to “B” and vice versa. If one thing is true that is not true of the other, then they are not identical. This is the test of identity.⁷⁵ If Jesus Christ is God, then the two are one in the same. If everything of God is true of Jesus Christ, and vice versa, then they are identical. However, if there is one thing that is true of one that is not true of the other, then they are not identical. If Jesus is not God, then we are discussing two things not one.

4. The Law of Rational inference: inferences can be made by reasoning from a series of premises to a conclusion (1 Cor 15:12-19).

Reasoning

Reasoning is what we do with information we already have. C. S. Lewis said about reasoning:

All possible knowledge, then depends on reasoning. . . Unless human reasoning is valid no science can be true. It follows that no account of the universe can be true unless that account leaves it possible for our thinking to be a real insight.⁷⁶

Reasoning is, the act by which the mind acquires new knowledge by means of what it already knows.⁷⁷ There are two kinds of reasoning, deductive and inductive.

Deductive reasoning: Deductive reasoning starts with a cause and reasons to an effect. A deductive argument starts with the cause (such as God) and reasons through a series of propositions to a conclusion (such as miracles are possible). Deductive arguments are formed in what is called a syllogism. Syllogisms are how we form a deductive argument. A syllogism is made up of two propositions and a conclusion:

If God exists, then miracles are possible.

God exists.

Therefore, miracles are possible.

Premise # 1: If God exists, then miracles are possible.

Premise # 2: God exist.

Conclusion: Miracles are possible.

The conclusion in a deductive argument is guaranteed if the two premises are correct. If the two premises are correct, the conclusion necessarily follows. In order to deny the conclusion, one must prove that one or more of the premises are false. Deductive reasoning is the method a classical apologist would use.

Inductive reasoning: The opposite of deductive reasoning is inductive reasoning. Inductive reasoning is an argument from the effect to the cause. It gathers up all the information and reasons back to a cause. It is what a scientist or a homicide detective would use to solve a case.⁷⁸ They would gather all the facts of the case to determine the cause. Inductive reasoning is used in the evidential method of apologetics. An evidentialist takes the effects such as the empty tomb, His appearances, conversions of non-believers, establishment of the church, to reason that Jesus rose physically and supernaturally, from the dead.

The chart below compares deductive and inductive reasoning.

Deductive Reasoning	Inductive reasoning
Reasons from the cause to the effect	Reasons from the effect to the cause
Reasons from the general to the particular	Reasons from the particular to the general
<i>a priori</i> reasoning (before the facts)	<i>a posteriori</i> reasoning (after the fact)
Philosophical reasoning	Scientific reasoning
Necessary conclusion	Probable conclusion
Conclusion is certain	Conclusion is only probable
Uses syllogisms	Does not use syllogisms
If the argument is valid, no chance the conclusion is false (certainty)	Inductive reasoning, even with good evidence, has the possibility of being false (probability)

Summary: Logic is unavoidable, and it plays a vital part in our daily life. Logic is a tool God has provided us, which allows us to properly arrange our thoughts and come to correct conclusions. Christians are not non-thinkers. Christians do not disregard the laws of logic or reason in order to believe in Christianity. To the contrary, Scripture says we are expected to use logic and our reasoning skills. By using both deductive and inductive reasoning, the truth of Christianity becomes certain. We believe in Christianity because it is rational and true. The laws of logic only help to prove the truth of Christianity, they do nothing to destroy it. A person who is a serious thinker ought to be a Christian. Moreland has well said:

We Christians must never forget that our God is a God of truth, reason, and logic. He speaks with wisdom to His children, invites them to reason and argue with Him logically, and demands that they present in logical fashion the reason why they believe. The image of God within us includes the faculty of abstract reasoning and logical thought.⁷⁹

Self-Refuting Statements

Often when Christians are sharing their faith, they are challenged by skeptics, agnostics, and non-believers with statements that are self-refuting. A self-refuting statement is a statement that refutes or denies the very principle it is trying to affirm. It fails to meet its own standard. For example, if someone says, “I cannot speak a word of English,” they have effectively refuted their statement because they have just spoken seven words in English. A self-refuting statement is also a violation of the most fundamental law of logic called the law of non-contradiction. The law of non-contradiction states that “A” is not “non-A.” That is to say, nothing can both *be* and *not be* at the same time and in the same respect. A statement cannot be both true and false at the same time, and in the same sense—one cannot speak English and not speak English at the same time. Christians should be well aware of some of the most ridiculous and irrational statements that are posed against them to try and undermine the validity of the Christian faith.⁸⁰

A self-refuting statement is a statement that refutes or denies the very principle it is trying to affirm. It fails to meet its own standard.

To start with, let’s take the law of non-contradiction. The law of non-contradiction cannot be denied without using it. If someone says, “**I do not believe in the law of non-contradiction,**” it is quite obvious they do because by making the statement, they perceive that to not believe is not the same thing as to believe—believe is a contradiction of non-belief. According to the law of non-contradiction “believe” cannot mean “believe” and “not believe” at the same time and in the same sense. Thus, by trying to deny the law of non-contradiction, they have affirmed it. It is quite evident, to be hit by a car is not the same as to not be hit by a car (very few would dare to refute that reality). People can deny the law of non-contradiction in theory but not in practice. If we did not use it in everyday life, this world would be utter chaos. Up must be up and down must be down. Left cannot mean right and good must mean the opposite of evil. Opposites cannot mean the same.

God created a world that is orderly and governed by both the laws of nature and the laws of logic. Logic is an essential property of God. He is the “basis of all logic (in the order of *being*), but logic is the basis of all knowledge of God (in the order of *knowing*).”⁸¹ Christianity is a rational worldview that is based on the principles of logic. God revealed both His world and His Word to us under the authority of the law of non-contradiction. Neither His world nor His Word can be comprehended without applying the law of non-contradiction. The interpretation of the doctrine of salvation itself is dependent on the law of non-contradiction.

Salvation is conditioned on believing (faith) in the provision God provided for sinful man. “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16 emphasis added). The law of non-contradiction is implicitly applied here, and it is explicitly applied in John 3:18. “He that believeth on him is not

condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God” (emphasis added). In God’s thought, believe is not the same thing as to not believe—one will get you eternal life, the other, condemnation.

A reoccurring self-refuting statement against Christianity today comes from the postmodern millennials and their denial of truth. A postmodern is quick to tell a Christian that **“there is no truth.”** It is unfortunate that a postmodern does not stop and think about what they are actually saying. To say there is no truth, is, in fact, making a truth claim. Rather than being taken back by their philosophy, the Christian only needs one reply to the postmodern claim that “there is no truth” and that is, “is that true?” If there is no truth, the statement itself cannot be true. The technique used to quickly reveal a self-refuting statement is to take the claim and apply it back to itself. If the statement fails to adhere to the claim it is making, it is self-refuting, contradictory, false, and nonsense.⁸²

The Christian worldview claims to have the objective truth. Christianity should be believed because it is true. The postmodern crowd sees Christianity as more of a pragmatic exercise. The charge against Christianity is often **“it’s true for you but not for me.”** The claim they are making is that all truth is not objective but rather subjective. The statement is self-refuting because it is making an objective truth claim. The postmodern expects their statement to be taken as truth that is binding on everyone. The simple reply would be, “is that just true for you or is it true for everybody?” Most people want there to be absolute truth; they just want to decide which truth is absolute.

Another attack on the claim that Christianity has the truth is, **“the truth can’t be known.”** Those who believe that we have no way of knowing the truth are called agnostics. This is a self-refuting statement because the agnostic has just made the claim to know some truth. The response should be, “If truth can’t be known, then how do you know that?” This statement would be similar to, **“you can’t really know anything for sure.”** The reply would likewise be; “how do you know that for sure?” A skeptic’s response might be, **“you should doubt everything.”** The reply, “should I doubt that?”

When kids leave home for college in this generation and enter the secular halls of academia, they are sure to be met with relativism. A relativist believes that truth is not a universal reality. The truth is relative amongst other things, to a situation, a person, society, or culture. So goes the statement, **“all truth is relative.”** The reply would be, “is that relative?” The statement is self-refuting because it denies the fact of its claim by trying to insinuate that the statement is objectively true. Truth cannot be refuted without assuming one has truth to refute it with. Relevance cannot prove relevance. It must be true something is relevant in order to be relevant. Therefore, all truth cannot be relative.

Christianity and science are thought to be at odds with each other. A Naturalist believes that the only reliable source of truth comes from within nature. Empiricism claims that empirical evidence is the only thing that can justify a truth claim. Many reject Christianity based on the claim that there is no scientific evidence for it. The claim is, **“only science can provide truth.”** The fallacy of this statement is that the statement itself was not verified by scientific evidence. It is, in fact, not a scientific statement but a philosophical one. All truth does not come from the science lab—including this statement. It is self-refuting because there is no scientific evidence to prove it.

In the marketplace of ideas and the current events of the day, it seems all ideologies, religions and philosophies are welcome except the Christian worldview. When the Christian view is put forth on matters such as marriage, homosexuality, abortion, or any other issues touching on morality, it is said to be offensive. The saying goes, **“you shouldn’t force your morality on others,”** and yet this is but another self-refuting statement. Those who would aim this statement at the Christian have indicted themselves of forcing their moral point of view just the same. The statement is forcing the moral view that it is wrong to force a moral point of view. The response would be, “is that your moral point of view?” Likewise, the statement **“you should be more tolerant”** often enters the same conversation. The statement itself defies tolerance. The response would be, “are you tolerant of my view?” The pluralistic society of today is tolerant of all points of view but often draws the line at Christianity. **“You shouldn’t try to convert people to your way of thinking.”** The response. “You do not believe that, or you would not be trying to convert me to your way of thinking that it is wrong to convert people.”

Sometimes there are even statements we deal with from within our own camp of Christianity. Just because we are Christian does not mean we are above making a self-refuting statement. A misunderstanding of Mathew 7:1-5 has often led to the phrase **“you shouldn’t judge.”** Oops! The person who says this is judging. They are judging that it is wrong to judge.

It is often said, **“doctrine does not matter,”** or **“I don’t want doctrine, I just want Jesus.”** Apparently, doctrine does matter because both statements are a form of doctrine. “Doctrine does not matter,” to which you would reply, “is that your doctrine?” To the second statement, the question becomes, what teaching about Jesus do you want? “Do you want the Jesus of the Jehovah’s Witnesses, Islam, or the Jesus of orthodox Christianity?” To assert one does not want doctrine is indeed a doctrine itself. Since Christianity professes to be the truth, and all truth is exclusive—to say that “doctrine does not matter” would be to assume that truth does not matter. Both are self-refuting statements. If “truth does not matter,” this statement does not matter.

Some will contend that the church is no place for philosophy and logic. Those are specialties that belong to the secular universities. **“I don’t believe in logic.”** To which the reply, “is it logical for me to believe that you do not believe in logic?” One must use logic to try to disprove logic. Some will turn right to Colossians 2:8 and say, **“Christians should not use philosophy,”** to which you would reply, “is that your philosophy?” To say we should not use philosophy is a philosophy in itself.

It is evident that we are faced with self-refuting statements in much of life. Most are aimed at Christianity, but they are absolutely powerless in posing any threat to the validity of the Christian worldview. A self-refuting statement is contradicting and has no bearing on reality. It can easily be dismissed for the absurdity that it is. 1 Thessalonians 5:21 says that we are to, “Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.” One tool God has provided for the use of testing for truth and goodness is the laws of logic. Logic has the power to discern the truth from a contradiction. Moreover, the law of non-contradiction prohibits a lie to be the truth, and evil to be good (Isaiah 5:20). Below is a quick reference list of self-refuting statements with the technique to recognize them applied.



STATEMENT	TECHNIQUE (apply the statement to itself)
There is no truth	Is that true?
You can't know truth	Then how do you know that to be true?
It's true for you but not for me	Is that true for both you and me?
No one has the truth	Is that the truth about the truth you have?
All truth is relative	Is that relative truth or absolute truth?
Only science can give us truth	Did science give you that truth?
There are no absolutes	Is that an absolute?
All truth comes by experience	What experience told you that?
All truth depends on one's perspective	Is that just your perspective?
You should doubt everything	Should I doubt that?
It is arrogant to claim to have the truth	Is that a claim of truth and arrogance?
You should not judge	Is that a judgment?
You shouldn't force your morality on others	Is that your moral view you are forcing on me?
You should not try to convert people	Are you trying to convert me to your view?
You should be tolerant of all views	Then why are you critical of mine?
God does not take sides	Does God take that side?
You should live and let live	Isn't that telling me how to live?
Doctrine does not matter	Is that your doctrine?
I don't believe in philosophy	Isn't that a philosophy?
I don't use logic	Is that a logical statement?
Logic is not important	Did you use logic to determine that?
Words are meaningless	Didn't you use words to convey that?
God is unknowable	Isn't that a claim to know something about God?
There is no ultimate reality	Is that ultimate reality?
There is no metanarrative of life	Is that a metanarrative of life?

Chapter Eight

Arguments for God's Existence

“What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us”

A. W. Tozer

Three Arguments

1. Cosmological Argument:⁸³ (*cosmos* means world or universe). This is an argument from creation. The cosmos needs a Creator:

1. Whatever begins to exist has a cause.
2. The universe began to exist.
3. Therefore, the universe has a cause.

The **first premise** (whatever begins to exist has a cause) is a fundamental law of science called the law of causality. The uniform regularity of nature demonstrates that everything that has a beginning has a cause. Things do not pop into existence without a cause. Nothing (no-thing) cannot produce something (some-thing). Not only does science demonstrate this but our everyday experience of life demonstrates it as well.

Premise two (the universe began to exist) requires a bit more information to prove. We find proof that the universe had a beginning in the second law of thermodynamics. The second law of thermodynamics states that entropy will increase in a closed system making the amount of usable energy decrease until equilibrium is reached. What this means for the universe is that minute by minute the universe is running out of usable energy and will someday experience heat death. If the universe had no beginning, enough time by now would have elapsed for all of its energy to have been used up. Heat death would have already taken place. Since the universe still has usable energy, we know that it must have had a beginning. Limited amount of usable energy prevents any possibility of the universe being eternal. For something to be eternal inside a closed system it must possess within itself an unlimited supply of energy to sustain itself forever. The universe does not possess that capability. The universe was dependent on an outside source to supply it with the energy it started with and if an outside source does not add more usable energy into the universe, it will eventually die.⁸⁴

If space, time, and matter (universe) had a beginning, the cause cannot be found from within the universe itself (nature). The universe cannot bring itself into existence (self-caused) because it would have to exist before it existed to bring itself into existence, that is absurdity (violates the law of non-contradiction). Moreover, the universe cannot give to itself something it does not have to give. As the law of causality states, the cause must be greater than the effect. The cause of the universe must itself be, uncaused, self-sustaining, immaterial, nonphysical, and powerful enough to create a universe from nothing. All the evidence points to a supernatural creator—the God of the Bible.⁸⁵

Note: many will suggest that scientists have offered naturalistic theories that disprove the singularity of space, time and matter exploding into existence out of nothing. The theories include multiverse, oscillating universe, chaotic inflationary universe, quantum gravity universe, and cyclic ekpyrotic scenario. Despite their impressive names, they do not disprove the beginning of space, time, and matter. The theories only push the cause back one more step. The question then becomes what caused the multiverse, oscillating universe, and so on. These theories do nothing to disprove God. A Supernatural explanation is still needed to account for the beginning of it all. A second challenge from scientists is that quantum physics has proven that something can come from nothing (Copenhagen interpretation). By making this claim, they are committing the fallacy of equivocation with the word *nothing*. When scientists propose that these models are creating something from *nothing*, they are changing the meaning of the word *nothing*. These theories all start in the subatomic world and in a vacuum where energy is already present. That is not creating out of *nothing* (no-thing), that is the result of what is taking place when something (some-thing) is already present. In this case, the space, the time, the matter, and the laws of nature are already present. This is a contradiction indeed because they are starting with something rather than *nothing*.⁸⁶

We can **conclude** with great certainty and probability (all determined by science) that everything that begins had a cause. The universe had a beginning; Therefore, the universe had a Supernatural cause (i.e., God).

Apologetic note: The cosmological argument demonstrates that God is:

- Self-existent – He exist in and of Himself.
- Eternal – He had no beginning nor will He have an end.
- He has a mind and a will- He chose to create.
- God is omnipotent – He has the power to create from nothing and the power to sustain it.
- He is omniscient -He knows how to create.
- Supernatural – He is the creator of nature and is capable of acting within it (miracles).
- He is immaterial – He created time space and matter.
 - To create time, He cannot be in time or subject to time
 - To create space, He cannot be in space or subject to space
 - To create matter, He cannot be matter or subject to the effects of matter

a functioning organism. The code is so complex and specific it is impossible to happen by chance. Even if all the parts were there, they would have to be arranged in a highly complex order to have the message capable of producing life.

Conclusion: The evidence demonstrates that the universe contains highly complex design, which requires an intelligent designer.

Apologetic note: The teleological argument demonstrates that God is:

- Omniscient – He has the ability to design a complex universe.
- Purposeful – He created with a purpose.

3. Moral argument

1. Moral laws imply a Moral Law Giver.
2. There is an objective moral law.
3. Therefore, there is a Moral Law Giver

Premise one: It is obvious that if a law exists, someone made it. Take, for instance, the rules that govern the United States of America. They come from the legislative branch of our government system. It is self-evident that a law has a law giver.

Premise two: The most obvious proof that an objective moral law exists is the fact that people are offended by certain behavior and will argue to the fact of right and wrong. People will often say things such as, “you ought not do that” — “How would you like it if I did that to you?” — “That’s my seat, I was there first” — “Come on, you promised.”⁸⁷ These statements do not appeal to an institutional law, city law, state law, or even a country mandated law. Rather, they appeal to a kind of standard of behavior that every person expects the other to know and obey.⁸⁸ A law (morality) that is natural and basic to all people—do not lie, do not steal, do not cheat, do not murder. No matter where you travel in this world, when you arrive, you do not have to obtain a copy of the laws to know if that particular location prohibits lying, cheating, stealing, or murdering. You know these things are wrong regardless of local regulations. These natural moral laws transcend time and geography because they are innate in all humans.

Further proof of this intrinsic moral law is that when broken the offender does not deny it exist; he rather makes excuses for why he broke it. A reason why he did what he did—why he took your seat, why he broke his promise, why he lied, why he murdered. The very fact that people argue on these issues proves there is a higher standard (moral law) that exists. One would have to assume the moral law exists in order to argue against it. The moral law is not always obvious in someone’s behavior; that is, the way they treat others, but it is always obviously present, by the way, they expect to be treated. Lewis observes two points pertaining to the moral law:

First, that human beings, all over the earth, have this curious idea that they ought to behave in a certain way, and cannot really get rid of it. Secondly, that they do not in fact behave in that way. They know the Law of Nature; they break it. These two facts are the foundation of all clear thinking about ourselves and the universe we live in.⁸⁹

Conclusion: Since it is self-evident that a moral law exists and laws require law givers, then it follows that a moral law giver exists.

Apologetic note: The Moral argument demonstrates that God is:

- Immutably moral – He is the unchanging transcendent moral standard.

Summary: Above are three basic arguments (from nature) for the existence of God. There are many more, but these are the most basic and fundamental. While one argument does not prove God's existence with 100% certainty, together they make the probability of God's existence very rational. The premises deductively secure a conclusion that is beyond any doubt. If the premises are true, the conclusion must follow.

Apologetic note: If Christian's arm themselves with these basic arguments they will significantly increase their ability to do apologetics. They will increase their ability to fulfill (1 Peter 3:15). It is beneficial to be able to give evidence (through nature) outside of Scripture for the existence of God. The arguments for God are beneficial for those who challenge the Bible or claim a different book as Scripture. If someone does not believe the Bible to be true, the Christian will probably not gain much ground by saying, "the Bible says." It is highly improbable that a nonbeliever will believe the miracles of the Word of God until they believe there is a God capable of writing the Word.

Chapter Nine

Naturalism versus Supernaturalism

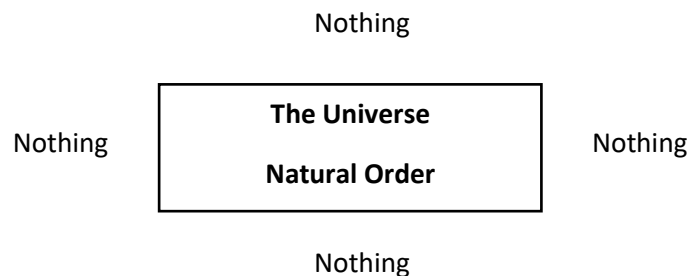
“That there are what I or anyone would call supernatural forces at work is now, I think, a scientifically proven fact.”

Robert Jastrow

Natural Versus Supernatural

There are two Worldviews to be discussed in regard to miracles. One is a view called naturalism (atheism), and the other would-be supernaturalism (theism). It is a metaphysical difference (what is ultimate reality) that distinguishes the two.

Naturalism: For a naturalist, reality is that the universe is simply material. There are no immaterial or spiritual entities that exist. The universe is a closed system governed by the laws of physics. A naturalist would maintain that nature is all that exist. As Carl Sagan once put it, “the cosmos is all that is or was or ever will be.” The naturalist believes the universe is analogous to a box in which everything that happens inside the box is caused by something that is already in the box. There is nothing that exists outside of the box to influence what is in the box. Everything that exists in nature has its cause by something else that exist in nature.⁹⁰ See the diagram below:



A naturalist can be defined by the following five points:⁹¹

1. **Nature is prime reality:** Only nature exists.
2. **Nature is eternal:** If matter is prime reality, then it does not rely on anything other than itself for existence. Matter is the supreme thing that gives to all other things their existence. Matter is the cause of everything.
3. **Everything conforms to nature:** Every effect in the universe is caused by nature. There is no possibility of an effect within the closed system of the universe to have a cause outside of the universe. Everything uniformly concurs with the cause of nature. Nature is a self-explanatory system. It is never necessary to look outside of nature for answers.
4. **Everything that can be known is known from what is inside the box:** This means all knowledge is predicated on nature (five senses). The only way we can come to know something is through the five senses which is what we smell, touch, taste, hear or see. This

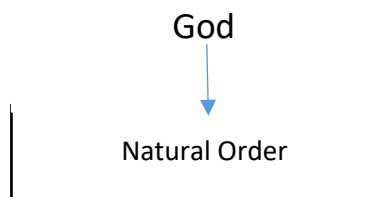
is often referred to as scientism. We can only know truth through science (See appendix for an explanation as to why this is incorrect).

5. **Nature is a deterministic system:** The cause of everything is nature, to include human actions. Human behavior is no more than a mental process determined by the motions of atoms. According to Francis Crick, an atheist and the codiscoverer of DNA, “your joys and your sorrows, your memories and your ambitions, your sense of personal identity and free will, are, in fact, no more than the behavior of a vast assembly of nerve cells and their associated molecules.”⁹² And as Richard Dawkins, renowned atheist and Oxford Professor of biology has said, “DNA neither cares nor knows. DNA just is. And we dance to its music.”⁹³

The conclusion of naturalism is a complete denial of miracles. As Ronald Nash writes:

Clearly, any person under the control of naturalistic presuppositions could not consistently believe in the miraculous. For such a person, evidence of a putative miracles can never be persuasive. Miracles, by definition, are impossible. No argument on behalf of the miraculous can possibly succeed with a naturalist. The only proper way to address that unbelief is to *begin* by challenging his or her naturalism.⁹⁴

Supernaturalism: Supernaturalism would be the opposite of naturalism. A Supernaturalist believes that ultimate reality is both immaterial and material. That is to say, the universe consists of a supernatural and the natural. There is something (supernatural) that is outside of nature to which nature is dependent on for both its origin and its sustainment. See the diagram below.



A Supernaturalist (theist) can be defined by the following four points:

1. **The Supernatural and nature are prime reality:** A Supernaturalist claims that there is a being outside of the universe (God) who created the universe and is capable of acting within it. The matter and the laws that govern matter inside the universe were created by God and He can intervene with the natural order whenever He so chooses.

2. **The supernatural is eternal:** Matter is not eternal (see cosmological argument) it is contingent and incapable of bringing itself into existence. All contingent things are at the mercy of a non-contingent being capable not only of bringing them into existence but also capable of sustaining them. God is the supernatural eternal creator and sustainer of all matter.
3. **Everything conforms with the purpose of the supernatural:** God as the creator of the universe gives meaning and purpose to it (see teleological argument). All things conform to His sovereignty. Nature is His design, and He has set it up to be orderly. However, He can act in nature supernaturally at any time by perform supernatural acts that are impossible for the order of nature to accomplish. The natural order of cause and effect can be broken by the supernatural (miracles).
4. **All knowledge does not belong to nature:** Because there is a supernatural knowledge is not limited to nature. The supernatural can reveal knowledge to His creation at any time through supernatural acts (miracles).
5. **Nature does not determine the ultimate outcome:** God created man, and man consists of both matter and immaterial (Gen 2:7). It is not the natural part of man (matter) that determines behavior it is the immaterial part (spirit). The cause of our behavior is not due to a chain of causes and effects found within our chemical make-up. This is made evident between the difference in duty and instinct. If human behavior is no more than a mental process determined by the motions of atoms, then we would only behave instinctively but this is not the case. Often times moral duty (something non-physical) takes precedence over instinct. If a

It's a Miracle

Often times many events are called miracles that simply do not constitute a miracle. The term has been so loosely used causing it to be debunked of its true meaning. The term miracle has been commonly applied to the birth of babies as well as when an extremely difficult task has been accomplished.⁹⁵ It is not uncommon to hear someone proclaim, "It's a miracle." A proper definition of a miracle is therefore, necessary to identify a miracle. Antony Flew defines a miracle as, "something which would never have happened had nature, as it were, been left to its own."⁹⁶ This definition well supports the fact that nature alone cannot produce a miracle. If the event is something in which it can be described by natural causes, it is void of the criteria of a miracle. There is no miraculous in a natural occurring event. Geisler maintains, "A miracle is a special act

of God that interrupts the normal course of events.”⁹⁷ However, Purtil offers seemingly the soundest fundamental definition; he defines a miracle as, “an event in which God temporarily makes an exception to the natural order of things, to show that God is acting.”⁹⁸ He adds:

Natural laws are ordained by God for the typical governance of phenomena in the natural world, such that events in the natural world follow a regular and predictable pattern. God, however, may wish to act directly in the world in a way that temporarily suspends the operation of natural laws in order to permit the identification of an event as uniquely and specially caused by God. Such an event which does not fit the law like pattern of events in the natural order is a miracle.⁹⁹

This makes clear; by definition, a miracle must be performed by a supernatural cause outside of the universe (outside of the possibilities of nature). Miracles have a cause that transcends nature.¹⁰⁰ If nature can produce it, it is not a miracle, it is simply “natural.”

All be it that the first creation of a human was a miraculous event (Gen 2:7), the birth of a baby is the result of the natural processes of procreation. Resuscitation can be performed by a physician (natural processes) however, the resurrection of a dead person cannot (supernatural process). Nature does not, in and of itself, possess the power to raise the dead. A resurrection is a supernatural event. A resurrection is a miracle.

Christianity is based on a book that boast of many miracles. In fact, the book itself is a claim of the miraculous (2 Peter 2:21). The Bible is filled with literally hundreds of miracles. Jesus himself claimed to be God in the flesh (John 1:1-18) who was born of a virgin (Matt 1:18), lived a perfect life (2 Cor 5:21), exercised miraculous power over nature (John 2:2-11, turned water to wine; 6:15-21, walked on water), over disease (John 5:1-18 healed a paralytic; 9:1-41, healed a blind man), and over death (John 11:1-44, raised Lazarus, John 20, raised Himself). The irony of miracles in Christianity is that in order to be a Christian one must believe a miracle—the resurrection of Christ. Miracles provide evidence for a truth claim. The Bible makes the claim that Jesus was God in the flesh, the miracle of the resurrection verifies all Jesus claimed to be. However, believing that Jesus was simply a miracle worker is insufficient—in order to be a Christian, one must believe in the gospel of the resurrection miracle itself. In other words, salvation is not based on the miracle of turning water into wine. The gospel message is not, “believe the miracle that Jesus turned water into wine and thou shalt be saved.” The gospel message is Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose bodily from the dead. There are many things that are presupposed in the gospel such as the deity and humanity of Christ, original sin, and the doctrine of imputation, but it is the all-

encompassing miracle of the resurrection that one is required to believe in for salvation. Christianity hinges on the miracle of the resurrection of Christ.

If a person is closed minded and their worldview prevents them from believing in the possibility of a miracle, then the miracles recorded in Scripture that are intended to verify a truth claim are, in fact, having the reverse effect. The many miracles recorded in Scripture prove to falsify the Bible rather than validate it for someone who does not believe miracles are possible. As C. S. Lewis has said:

It is no use going to the texts until we have some idea about the possibility or probability of the miraculous. Those who assume that miracles cannot happen are merely wasting their time by looking into the texts: we know in advance what results they will find for they have begun by begging the question.¹⁰¹

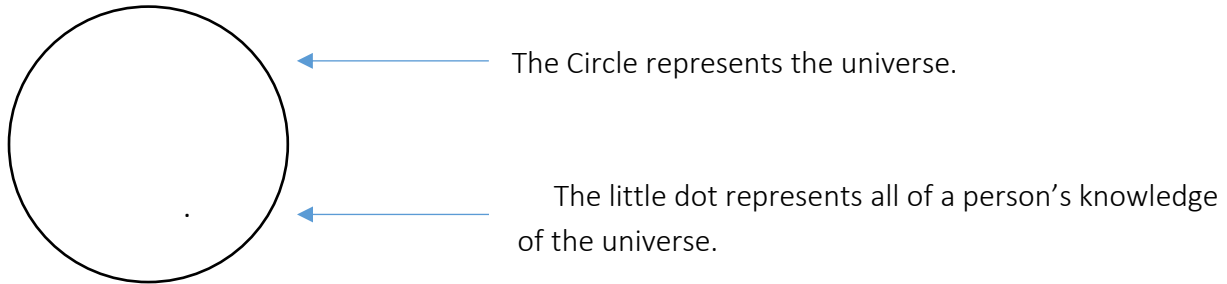
In other words, if a non-believer determines *a priori* (before the facts) to reading the Bible that miracles are not possible, then he has already determined the Bible is false before he has read it. This would be begging the question (putting the conclusion in the premise). In syllogism form it would look like this:

1. Miracles are not possible.
2. The Bible claims miracles.
3. Therefore, the Bible is false because miracles are not possible.

The apologetic task of the Christian is to remove the obstacle that stands in the way of a non-believer's faith. In this case, demonstrate to them that miracles are possible can remove the stumbling block. The apostle Paul said: "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God." Now read the verse again below in the context of a naturalist versus a theist.

"For the preaching of the cross (a miracle) is to them that perish foolishness (because they believe miracles cannot happen); but unto us which are saved (those who believe miracles are possible) it is the power of God."

If God exist, miracles are possible. In order to disprove miracles, one must disprove God. No one can disprove God. To make a universal negative claim such as, there is no God, is to claim to have universal knowledge of what exist. Remember the circle illustration.



No rational human being can claim to know everything that exists in this vast universe in which we occupy just a minute spec for an insignificant portion of time. No one can successfully prove God does not exist. The probability of God's existence far out ways the probability of Him not existing.

The Argument for Miracles

The arguments for God's existence give evidence to show a miracle working God exist. With the foundation laid for the possibility of miracles, the question turns from "do they exist" to "why they exist?" Why would a God, who can do miracles, do them? In other words, is there a specific purpose for miracles? The answer is yes. God performs miracles to accomplish at minimum, a threefold purpose:

1. To Glorify Himself (John 2:11; 11:40)
2. To give evidence that the messenger is a spokesman commissioned by God (Acts 2:22; Heb 2:3-4)
3. To give evidence that the message is from God (John 3:2, Acts 2:22; Heb 2:3).

Apologetic note: The arguments for the existence of God, logically flow to the proof of miracles:

1. If the world had a beginning, then it had a cause (cosmological argument).
2. The world had a beginning.
3. Therefore, the world had a beginner (God).
4. Creation is the biggest miracle of all.
5. If God can do greater miracles (creation), then He can do lesser miracles.
 - a. If He can create matter, He can multiply matter (feed 5000).
 - b. If He can bring life to dead matter, He can bring life back to a dead corpse (resurrection).¹⁰²
6. Conclusion
7. God exists so miracles are a reality.

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