

# ***APOLOGETICS***

(Part One)

- I. What is Apologetics?
  - A. From the Greek word "apologia" - a term used to describe the defense of one accused in a court of law.
  - B. To make a defense for Christianity against unbelievers, rationalists, relativists, the cults, proponents of opposing worldviews etc. by citing evidence from history, archaeology, reason, science, and common sense. ("The Bethsaida Miracle")
  - C. Historic Systematic Theology included *Dogmatics* (what we believe), *Polemics* (the errors of those within the church who teach otherwise), and *Apologetics* (how we defend what we believe in an unbelieving world.)
  
- II. The Biblical Basis for Apologetics:
  - A. 1 Peter 3:15: "Be ready to give an answer."
  - B. The example of Jesus: Luke 7:18-23 - "Tell John what you see and hear."
  - C. The example of the Apostles:
    1. Stephen: Acts 6:9-10 - opponents could not argue against his wisdom;
    2. Paul: Acts 17:22ff - Mar's Hill dialogue; Acts 26:2 - Defense before Agrippa
  - D. Faith founded on facts:
    1. Luke 2:1-2, 3:1-2: The writers intended to write an historic, eyewitness account.
    2. 1 Corinthians 15:3-8: Paul's defense of the Resurrection of Jesus.
    3. 2 Peter 1:16 - Not "cleverly invented stories!"
  
- III. Controversy over Apologetics:
  - A. The theologians and teachers within the LCMS are divided over the issue of apologetics. There are two positions held:
    1. Evidentialism: God has provided evidence for the truth of Christianity. We should offer that evidence to cause unbelievers to take another look at Christianity. LCMS pastor Dr. John Warwick Montgomery is probably the best known proponent of evidentialism within all of Protestantism.
    2. Fideism: Faith is a risk and is not based on evidence. Rather than arguing the case for Christianity we should preach the Gospel and allow the Holy Spirit to produce faith. Like Thomas, we believe without seeing!

Next Time: *Is there a Place for Apologetics?*

