

APOLOGETICS

(Part Three)

- I. Last time we spoke of natural apologetics – the existence of God, creation versus evolution, the existence of evil. We will now consider **Christian apologetics**. What is Christian apologetics?
- A. Those issues that are uniquely Christian.
 - B. Primary focus on the person of Jesus Christ – person and work of Christ.
 - C. Relationship between the person of Christ and the Bible – Christ on every page!
- II. Who is Jesus Christ?
- A. Jesus is greatest man who ever lived. Everybody has something good to say about Jesus Christ. The Jesus of faith is also the Jesus of history.
 - B. No person has influenced the history of the world as Jesus did. In 1996, all three major newsmagazines had the face of Jesus on their covers.
 - C. Jesus makes incredible claims about himself. He is God in the flesh! There are only four logical choices we can make about Jesus.
 1. He was a liar and deceiver – but what was he trying to accomplish? He really believed what he said. Therefore:
 2. He was insane, mentally ill, or a lunatic – but why should anyone believe anything good about him?
 3. He was a legend fabricated by his disciples – but how would they do that?
 4. He is everything that he said that he was.
 - D. What did the Old Testament Prophets predict: 1) Virgin birth [Is. 7:14]; 2) Born in Bethlehem [Mic. 5:2]; 3) Lived in Nazareth [Is. 9:1-2]; 4) Gentiles included [Is. 42:1-3]; 5) Entrance into Jerusalem [Zech. 9]; 6) 30 pieces of silver [Zech. 11:12-13]; 7) Vinegar and gall [Ps. 69:21]; 8) The Atonement [Is. 53].
 - E. We have eyewitness accounts of his life, death, and resurrection. What if we approached other historical figures with the same skepticism?
 - F. Evidence from archaeology
- III. The issue of the Resurrection! This is the central issue pertaining to Jesus Christ. Was he raised from the dead or wasn't he?
- A. Alternative theories:
 1. Swoon theory
 2. Passover Plot
 3. Stolen body
 4. Hallucination theory
 - B. What do we know for sure?
 1. Jesus died and was buried.
 2. His disciples lost hope.
 3. The tomb was empty.
 4. Interesting account.
 5. Transformed lives.
 6. Martyrs
 7. The central message.
 8. Proclaimed in Jerusalem.
 9. Sabbath day is now Sunday.
 10. Unbelievers convinced.
- IV. The Preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ!
- A. Through preaching, the Holy Spirit produces faith.
 - B. Multitudes changed by the Gospel – the power of God unto salvation.
 - C. Considered foolishness by the world – life-changing for the Christian.
 - D. We preach Jesus Christ!

Next Time: *Lutheran apologetics*