

DNA 3.2.5 Apologetics

(i) Apologetics – Common objections to the Gospel

1 Peter 3:15 (New King James Version)

¹⁵ But sanctify the Lord God ⁱⁿ in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear

Several books on topic he's read:

Josh McDowell: Evidence That Demands a Verdict/More Evidence....

Hard to read, written in law language, but powerful. McDowell was trying to disprove the Bible, came away a believer.

Lee Stroebel: The Case for Christ. Straight-forward reading; solid research, powerful, practical.

We will always be involved at some level in apologetics.

Glad it's called "apologetics" not "argumentation."

Someone interested in arguing is not interested in truth – interested in debating.

Attacking others leads to defensiveness – not the way to keep communication open.

About UNDERSTANDING the arguments or objections that enemy puts in

people's minds.

Helps to take on perspective of the listener – what's relevant to them?

There is a limit, though – don't lose your grounding! Don't get caught trying to chase down to the lowest common denominator. Don't get tricked into going off course.

The Devil is a Liar. Lying is his native tongue. Masquerades as an angel of light. (Mask means it's not real; he has no light anymore.)

Light symbolizes: 1) Truth, 2) Revelation

Satan is a deceiver, destroyer.

Our job: dislodge the lies, objections placed in human minds that keep them from God.

Weapons of warfare are not carnal

2 Cor 10:3-5 "For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ...."

This passage places the process in reverse order of how things happen – first a thought, then imaginations/opinions, arguments, and finally strongholds.

(ii) Questions and Answers

1. ***I have to see to believe.***

Powerful answer is the movie "Matrix." Putting fear, doubt, and disbelief behind, have to grab onto belief.

Magicians' job is to deceive – create illusions. The mind can be incredibly deceived by what we see.

The Bible is upside down to the world – Believing comes first, then seeing.

2. ***God has failed me in the past. I've been hurt in life and I blame God.***

Two options in this world: Get better or bitter. God will never intentionally hurt someone, unless it is to save them from a greater danger.

Ask God why. Run to God, not from God. Seek answers. He has your best in mind.

3. ***Christians are fakes, hypocrites, judgmental.***

Yes, and so are all humans. Question: If you are here, and Jesus is there, and it's just a bunch of hypocrites' in-between, why not just walk past them to Jesus?

4. ***Christians have no fun.***

You are the best argument to this – how you live your life.

Ecclesiastes ("don't be too holy; don't be wicked.")

God wants you to have fun. Violating God's commands leads to disappointment, discouragement, emptiness, and death.

5. *I don't want to give up my way of living. It's too much.*

When you stand before God, your wealth and valued things/events won't stand up to God and heaven.

Jesus isn't necessarily asking you to give it up. You are asked to "surrender it."

You don't need earthly treasures in heaven; they are for now. Just don't be distracted, have wrong priorities, or gather stuff for its own sake. (Who's Lord?)

6. *God is angry with me. Church is too outdated, too boring.*

Legitimate complaints. We need to be considering HOW we represent God. Need church that's real, living and breathing.

7. *I had a bad experience with church.*

We also have bad experiences with food, but we keep eating.

8. *If God is good, why do people die?*

People die whether or not God is good. All people die.

9. *God is not fair. Why do bad things happen to good people?*

Bad things do happen to good people, but whether you are good or bad, bad things will happen. At least with Christ, we have a place to turn. Bad things happen because it's this side of eternity. A devil has destroyed this world. We have free will and make choices. We suffer consequences of our and other people's choices.

10. ***I don't want to give up control.***

"Exactly."

11. ***I grew up in church, so I'm saved.***

No, you're not. Revelation talks about the second death, called this because they are dead, awaiting judgment. We must be born again. Can't be born saved. Can't inherit salvation from family.

12. ***I'll do it when I'm older. Don't want to settle down yet, stop partying.***

You actually don't control God's invitation. He chooses you, you don't choose Him. He might not come to you when you're older.

Also, there might not be a tomorrow, an "older." We don't know how much time we have.

13. ***How do you know that Christianity is right?***

Every major religion pulls Jesus in. Buddhism, Islam, etc. He's different in every one. Jesus never mentions any of the other

religions. He said "I am the way, truth, life."

You can only lead people as far as you can go. Every other leader has a grave. Jesus went into the grave, but ROSE again. There is no tomb for Jesus. He declared – made it fundamentally real – He claimed to be God and proved it.

No one comes to the Father but through Jesus. No one else died for our sins. We all have a sinful nature that must be dealt with before connecting with God. It's unique in that we don't earn heaven, it's by grace.

14. ***The Bible is just stories. How do you know it's real?***

Archaeology. For 2000 years, the greatest minds of every century have tried to pull apart the Bible, to disprove it. Napoleon Bonaparte said, "Anyone who tries to conquer the Bible will be conquered by it." They end up being powerfully converted. Archaeology has proven over and over again. Cities, armies, civilizations keep being found that were thought to be mythical. Dead Sea Scrolls – texts over 5000 years old. No changes from then until now. Verses are exactly the same. Nothing doesn't change over time, unless divinely protected.

15. ***I'm an atheist. Prove to me Jesus is real today.***

Our lives should be 100% proof that Jesus is real. Our testimony of changed life. We can't make those radical changes ourselves.

16. ***There are many ways to get to heaven.***

Really, who told you that? Jesus says, "I am THE way, THE truth, THE life."

Heaven is perfection. Imperfection cannot enter perfection. (This

is why Satan had to leave.) The only way to heaven is for imperfection to PUT ON perfection – to be found IN CHRIST. We have a **gift** of perfection at the cross.

17. ***I have no time.***

You give God time, He'll give you eternity.

18. ***Christian lifestyle is too limiting.***

Narrow is the way. There are many things we need to limit in our life to be successful, regardless of whether we are Christian. Olympic athletes also have a narrow lifestyle. Choices, limits lead to freedom to attain goals. (Why do we put a gate around a school? Kids never even notice it!) Boundaries are to protect and enhance pleasure and joy.