

Grace Fellowship: A Church for All Nations / Colorado Christian University

Persuasive Apologetics

Tone and Truth

A Paper Presented at

the Evangelical Theological Society Annual Meeting

by

Jeffrey M. Robinson, Ph.D.

Fort Worth, Texas

November 16, 2021

## CONTENTS

Introduction .....	1-2
Why Apologize? .....	2-3
Tone Matters...even for Scholars .....	4-5
Eclectic Apologetics .....	5-7
Intellectual Smokescreens: The Noetic Effects of Sin .....	7-13
<i>Emotional Fog: The Father Wound</i> .....	9-12
<i>Street Smarts: The Value of Cultural Awareness</i> .....	12-13
Undercutting defeaters .....	13-20
<i>Scenario 1: The Widow Maker</i> .....	14-16
<i>Scenario 2: Buddha, Jesus, and the Four Sights</i> .....	16-20
Conclusion .....	20-21
Bibliography .....	22-35

## Introduction

This paper is an overview of my book, *Persuasive Apologetics: How to Handle Tough Questions Without Pushing People Away*, which is an attempt to blend popular-level tone with academic-level rigor. The book is currently required for two graduate and two undergraduate apologetics courses at Colorado Christian University. I'm thankful for endorsements of scholars such as Gary Habermas, William Dembski, David Baggett, Malcolm Yarnell, and church leaders Thom Rainer and Tommy Green.

I will address the art of crafting intellectually robust arguments in an emotionally intelligent and winsome manner. The vast majority of modern apologetics books deal primarily with arguments rather than provide guidance on how to apply the evidence in a winsome and persuasive way. This project seeks to bridge the gap between the actual arguments and the emotional underpinnings that would otherwise cause people to turn away from, rather than lean into, where the reasoning leads. In this sense, I address the integration of critical thinking and emotional intelligence.

Outside of academia, we rarely have the luxury of laser-focused conversations. Therefore, I intend to give *the essentials to be an effective witness for Christ and nothing more*. Yes, I walk through some historical nuggets and philosophical handles, but only as they relate to the task of guiding others to a warranted confidence in Jesus Christ.

The abiding value of persuasive, and therefore effective, apologetics continues to grow, as does our awareness of the myriad problems revealed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. A fracturing Western

culture, the rise of secularism, and its increasing attacks on Christianity, combined with the moral failure of certain high-profile Christian leaders, are some of the reasons why presentations of the gospel are met with no small amount of emotionally driven resistance and outright skepticism.

So, this approach stems from both my academic background as well as my tenure as a lead pastor of a local church. I currently serve as lead pastor of Grace Fellowship: A Church for All Nations, a large multi-cultural church in West Palm Beach, Florida with 68 first-generation nations represented. According to Barna research, Grace is located at the epicenter of the top “never-churched” region in the United States.<sup>1</sup> Yet, through God’s grace, Grace has become a regional leader in evangelism through reaching an increasingly diverse and post-Christian culture with the gospel. By no means are we experts nor do we aim for the all-too-common self-aggrandizement of personal or organizational branding. But we do wish to share what we are learning to be of service to the larger evangelical community. In our approach, we emphasize robust expository preaching through an apologetics lens, rigorous discipleship, and intentional personal evangelism to, in less scholarly terms, keep the main thing, the main thing.

### *Why Apologize?*

Loving our neighbors well includes engaging in robust arguments (*ἀπολογία*) in order to demolish false belief systems. We do this out of love for the person rather than to egotistically carve another notch in the belt while we listen to *Drowning Pool*’s “Let the Bodies Hit the

---

<sup>1</sup> “Churchless Cities: Where Does Your City Rank?” *Barna Research*, May 1, 2015, <https://www.barna.com/research/churchless-cities-where-does-your-city-rank/>.

Floor.” We could say that apologetics is the art of loving people by addressing their questions in an intellectually rigorous, yet gentle and respectful manner.

Think of the last time you’ve been at odds with another person, and suddenly you realized that you were mistaken. They were right and you were wrong. It’s that one-liner, story, or “what about?” that unlocked your mental vault. Immediately, it all came into focus and you realized just how far off base you actually were. Maybe it was a question of fact. Or, you may have been blinded to a character blind spot. Even among us scholars, *how* the other person carries out the “mic drop” moment can strongly affect our response. Knowing that you’re wrong is a tough road. Walking that road is even more challenging. But if the delivery comes with the additional items of snark, sarcasm, or spite, we will be more tempted to dig in...even if we *know* deep down that we’re in the wrong. Because of an opponent’s tone and tenor, I may not *want* them to know that they’ve shown me the error of my ways. On the other hand, if the person’s attitude exudes gentleness and respect, then we’re far more likely to admit what we now realize is the truth.

*How* we deliver a reasoned defense of Christianity is crucial. Gentleness and respect effectively prepare the emotions and lower the tension so that the mind and volition can absorb compelling arguments for biblical Christianity. Indiscriminately dropping what we self-assuredly label as “Truth Bombs” without the accompanying spirit of gentleness and respect may earn us a high view count on a YouTube clip or two. But it will be largely ineffective in making disciples. Apologetics is far more than dry data dumps because humans are complex creatures. Yes, we’re rational (or at least some of us are some of the time). But we also have these things called feelings. And our tone makes a difference with whether people really “hear” us or not.

## Tone Matters...even for Scholars

For us to love people well, we need to be exclusive in our theology, but inclusive in our tone and personal skills. Here's what I mean: we never compromise on the clear teachings of Scripture. But we should do our utmost to be winsome, kind, and simply a nice person to be around. We should be willing to, from the heart, love and welcome every single person from *every* background and belief. Whether in professional debates or one-on-one discussions, apologetics, and the *way* we communicate is like the bait, and repentance from sin and faith in Jesus is the hook of the gospel.<sup>2</sup>

Here are a couple of guardrails if you find yourself unintentionally steamrolling people rather than effectively making disciples. First, Christians are called to compassionately persuade non-Christians of the truth of the gospel. 2 Corinthians 5:11a reads: "Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade others." God calls us to reach out to the struggling rather than strongarm our neighbors into believing. Persuasiveness includes rigorously appealing to the mind with deep moral sentiments that reflect God's law engraved on the conscience (Rom. 2:14-16).

Here's the point: If people do not respect our character, they will be less prone to be persuaded by our message. Notice how the Apostle Paul connects influence within the church with both sound doctrine and strong personal character: "But as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine...Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity, and sound speech that cannot be condemned, so that an opponent may be put to shame, having nothing evil to say about us" (Tit. 2:1, 7-8). For people to "hear" and not

---

<sup>2</sup> Ray Comfort, "I Love Apologetics," *Living Waters*, February 5, 2018, <https://www.livingwaters.com/i-love-apologetics/>.

revile our sound doctrine, our integrity and dignity must be unassailable. Online or in-person invectives and abrasive rhetoric rarely lead others out of false belief systems.

Second, Jesus did not call us to pick fights or seek out controversial matters as gimmicks for self-centered notoriety. The Apostle Paul reminds believers: “And the Lord’s servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth” (2 Tim. 2:24-25). Notice how the text fuses rigorous intellectual reasoning and gentleness. This is fathoms apart from theological compromise. **We are hermeneutically warranted to say that correcting *without gentleness* is blatant disobedience to Scripture.**

We would do well to avoid the false dichotomy between doctrinal fidelity and a winsome way of interacting with others. **Reason and evidence are vital, but gentleness is how we emotionally prepare the other person to receive those reasons for following that evidence.** Emotional preparation effectively precedes epistemological receptivity. As professional academics, let us strive to be marked by truth, gentleness, and respect (1 Pet. 3:15) because there is already a stereotype waiting for us, fashioned in the factory of Post-Truth contemporary Western culture.

### Eclectic Apologetics

To persuasively answer tough questions, we must be versatile. Apologetics isn’t a standardized assembly line. It’s a battle within the mind, will, and emotions of actual image bearers, which tend to be messy. Apologetic approaches should be servants, not masters because we’ll need different tactics at certain times. In some cases, we’ll do well to lead with

presuppositionalism and Reformed Epistemology which can take away the opponent's first strike ability by preempting their attack of "Christianity is unreasonable or irrational" by questioning their ability to reason on a naturalistic worldview. RE displays incredible takedown power, but there's a noticeable lack of offensive weaponry. On the other hand, the classical apologist brings an astonishing array of offensive tools. The moral argument for God's existence could deeply stir persons troubled by human rights abuses in the world. One size does not fit all.

Then there's the evidentialist who utilizes accessible historical data that provides a backdoor connection to a biblical framework. All these methods have their respective strengths and I believe we should use them regardless of our theological tribes. Whether you have a John Calvin motivational poster hanging in your room or say that *Free Willy* is your favorite movie just so you can have an excuse to talk about free will, I would encourage you to be committed first to the gospel rather than a particular apologetic approach. I'm not advocating theological compromise, but suggesting we use every available tool within the tent of biblical Christianity.

Christians should resist the temptation to view persons with whom they speak as merely talking points or illustrations of a particular apologetic approach's superiority. The glory of God is our ultimate target in apologetics, so we aim at the practical targets of strengthening Christians as well as helping those far from God come to know God. Francis Schaeffer says it well regarding apologetic methodology: "I do not believe there is any one apologetic which meets the needs of all people... There is no set formula that meets everyone's need, and if only applied as a mechanical formula, I doubt if it really meets anyone's need — short of an act of God's mercy."<sup>3</sup>

While Schaeffer leaned towards presuppositionalism, he didn't methodologically restrict himself. His warning against "mechanistic formula" reminds us that persons are not automatons.

---

<sup>3</sup> Francis A. Schaeffer, *The God Who is There: The Complete Works of Francis A. Schaeffer: A Christian Worldview* (Westchester: Crossway Books, 1982), in *Logos Library System*.



Perhaps his actual experience of stepping beyond academic discussion and peer-reviewed publications to conversating with spiritually parched students broadened his horizons. **It's one thing to read books about fishing. It's quite another to go out on the water and bait your own hook.**

### Intellectual Smokescreens: The Noetic Effects of Sin

Why do intelligent people sometimes choose what they do? I'm not talking about the Darwin Awards, Jeff Foxworthy's "Here's Your Sign," montage, YouTube's Fail Army videos from the mid-2000s, or interviews with the average person on the street that reveal a terrifying lack of basic historical knowledge. I'm referring to a willful ignorance of the truth about God. Intellectual smokescreens are when a person does not *want* to see. As we know, the noetic effects of sin is the idea is that sin has affected not only the cosmos, but how we process and think about the world. Sin has tainted human reason, so unbelief is rarely *just* an intellectual issue.

While I greatly respect Van Til's commitment to the gospel and the glory of God his claim that the noetic effects of sin are so extensive that "man is blind with respect to the truth wherever the truth appears."<sup>4</sup> If the noetic effects of sin have irrevocably scrapped the *imago Dei*, then appealing to evidence through the use of reason is an exercise in futility.<sup>5</sup> Outside of a move of the Holy Spirit, a person's reasoning ability is totally flawed and, as far as apologetics is concerned, useless.<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> Cornelius Van Til, *Christian Apologetics*, ed. William Edgar (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed, 1976), 92.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>6</sup> Van Til quotes Calvin: "there is great repugnance between the organic movements and the rational part of the soul. As if reason also were not at variance with herself, and her counsels sometimes conflicting with each other

However, the Apostle Paul's description of unbelievers in Romans 1-2 seems to suggest otherwise. If unregenerate persons are without any epistemic access to God, then Paul's reference to the external witness of God's existence in nature is a bit confusing. Just because non-Christians *reject* the knowledge of God, it does not follow that they have no ability to *reason* about God. Furthermore, if natural theology is of no use, then why does Paul use it?<sup>7</sup>

Paul recognizes the external witness of nature to God's existence, and the conscience as the innate witness to God's essential attributes (Rom. 1:18-21; 2:14-15). **Whatever the specific extent of the noetic effects of sin, it cannot mean the absence of a divine witness, a lack of knowledge of one's own moral guilt, or the ability to reason about God's attributes, even if that reasoning is defective.** Despite being sinners, all persons still have the internal barometer of God's law inscribed on the heart.<sup>8</sup> I believe that persuasive apologetics eventually appeals to the human conscience which is the apologist's internal ally regardless of what a person claims to believe about the existence of God or moral absolutes.

Suppose regeneration is divorced from any leveling work in the mind and conscience. Why does the Apostle Paul appeal to this sort of common ground in his sermon before the philosophers at the Areopagus (Ac. 17)? Why would Paul quote Epimenides of Crete (a pagan

---

like hostile armies. But since this disorder results from the deprivation of nature, it is erroneous to infer that there are two souls, because the faculties do not accord harmoniously as they ought." *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> J. P. Moreland provides some helpful commentary here: "I am not suggesting that the only thing in Scripture relevant to evangelism is rational argument and apologetics. However, I am suggesting that *apologetics is an absolutely essential ingredient to biblical evangelism*. And it is easy to see why. An emphasis on reasoning in evangelism makes the truthfulness of the gospel the main issue, not the self-interested 'fulfillment' of the listener." J. P. Moreland, *Love Your God With All Your Mind: The Role of Reason in the Life of the Soul*, ed. Dallas Willard (Colorado Springs: Navpress, 1997), 132.

<sup>8</sup> John Calvin goes so far as to acknowledge: "Men of sound judgment will always be sure that a sense of divinity which can never be effaced is engraved upon men's minds. Indeed, the perversity of the impious, who though they struggle furiously are unable to extricate themselves from the fear of God, is abundant testimony that this conviction, namely, that there is some God, is naturally inborn in all, and is fixed deep within, as it were in the very marrow." John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, trans. Ford Lewis Battles (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1960), 43. Spiegel, 105-106.

poet) in the middle of that sermon if common ground didn't exist (Ac. 17:28)? Paul used the common ground of theism, albeit polytheism, to make an inroad for the resurrection. Unless one adopts the position that Paul's apologetic was unbiblical, Acts 17 should serve as a prime example of salvaging anything of relevance to make one's case for biblical Christianity. He "reasoned about righteousness and self-control and the coming judgment" with Felix to the point that the ruler became "alarmed" (Ac. 24:25). His approach is comparable to mixed martial art apologetics in that he adapts to different audiences.<sup>9</sup> God is sovereign. So, when the sovereign God says: "Give a reasoned defense with gentleness and respect" we do just that. If God has ordained the use of means, let us unsheathe the tools God has sanctioned to do the work He has called us to do.

Justin Martyr sets in perspective the *imago Dei* and the ability to reason where he writes: "in the beginning he made the human race with the power of thought and of choosing the truth and doing right so that all men are without excuse before God; for they have been born rational and contemplative."<sup>10</sup> Working with the knowledge that unbelief is not a purely philosophical issue allows the apologist to parry foreseeable attacks. Operating on the basis that persons are not machines and that doubts arise from other sources than just the intellect is crucial for effective apologetics. Information without discernment is likely to be as ineffective as it is offensive. As scholars, along with our quest for knowledge, let us also seek the spiritual gift of discernment to that we will be further enabled to answer tough questions without pushing people away.

### *Emotional Fog: The Father Wound*

---

<sup>9</sup> Yet, he still presses the truth of the resurrection, the necessity of repentance from sin, and the need for faith in Christ See Ac. 14:6-7; 16:10, 14-15; 29-33; 18:5; 28:23; 2 Cor. 10:5; 9:19-23; Col. 4:6; Tit. 1:9.

<sup>10</sup> Justin Martyr, "First Apology," in *Classical Readings in Christian Apologetics*, 17.

As we've both studied and experienced, despite the power of human reason, the noetic effects of sin are far from minimal. Smokescreen intellectual arguments against God's existence or the resurrection are, in Douglas Groothius' tweak of William James' famous phrase: "the will to disbelieve."<sup>11</sup> James Spiegel's brilliant work, *The Making of an Atheist*, examines the link between immorality and unbelief wherein he argues: "When smart people go in irrational directions, it is time to look elsewhere than reasoning ability for an explanation."<sup>12</sup>

Secularists attempt to make the case that atheism and agnosticism are a matter of intellect and that theists (Christians specifically) have turned off the rational switch and taken a blind leap into the dark cavern of faith. It's that subtle assumption that skepticism equals intelligence. Inclination towards atheism is "a selective intellectual obtuseness or imperviousness to truths related to God, ethics, and human nature. *But the root of this obtuseness is moral in nature*" (emphasis mine).<sup>13</sup> If Spiegel is even remotely correct about atheism going deeper than the intellect, what are the major contributing factors?

First, the "Father Wound" can come in the form of an absent, abusive, or aloof father figure. Alfred C. W. Davis identifies the effect of a father wound as "low self-esteem, a deep emotional pain inside and a performance orientation that makes us 'doers' rather than 'beings.'"<sup>14</sup> Deep down, desiring the approval of one's father is properly basic and emotionally normative. Nevertheless, most persons have incurred some level of a father wound. Maybe dad

---

<sup>11</sup> Groothius, *Christian Apologetics*, 142-146.

<sup>12</sup> Spiegel, 51.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 56.

<sup>14</sup> Alfred C. W. Davis, "Understanding and Healing the Father Wound," *Focus on the Family*, <https://www.focusonthefamily.ca/content/understanding-and-healing-the-father-wound>.

rarely affirmed or never said he was proud of us. Or, dad was around, but he was emotionally distant. Maybe he was even physically or mentally abusive.

On the other hand, perhaps dad was overbearing. I'm not talking about a dad who was merely strict, organized, or disciplined, but someone who had earned multiple PhDs in "Critiqueology" and applied their expertise 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. No matter how much you achieved, he always had something negative to say. Rather than helpful counsel and guidance, it's a dad who was unable to control himself and change the channel from the station of incessant criticism. Maybe he was trying to live out his failed sports or professional aspirations through his child. Whether or not we want to acknowledge this, knowledge of the father wound is a crucial piece of battlefield intelligence in apologetics.

Lee Strobel discovered that his strained relationship with his own father shaped his view of God: "I had a very difficult relationship with my father. *The Case for Christ* movie portrays that. That may have been something that nudged me towards atheism."<sup>15</sup> Spiegel concurs with Strobel recounting a shocking number of famous atheists with abusive or weak fathers.<sup>16</sup>

In addition to the link between a father wound and atheism, the data suggest a possible correlation between immorality and atheism.<sup>17</sup> If a person's lifestyle is driven by sexual sin, then they will be less inclined to believe in a holy God who commands a righteous lifestyle. Again,

---

<sup>15</sup> Allen Satterlee, "It's Personal: Lee and Leslie Strobel on 'The Case for Christ': The changes in Leslie led Lee to investigate Christianity to refute it," *War Cry*, <https://magazine.thewarcry.org/stories/its-personal-lee-and-leslie-strobel-on-the-case-for-christ>.

<sup>16</sup> "Thomas Hobbes—was seven years old when his father deserted the family. Voltaire—had a bitter relationship with his father, whose surname (Arouet) he disowned. Baron d'Holbach—was estranged from his father and rejected his surname (Thiry). Ludwig Feuerbach—was scandalized by his father's public rejection of his family (to live with another woman). Samuel Butler—was physically and emotionally brutalized by his father. Sigmund Freud—had contempt for his father as a "sexual pervert" and as a weak man. H.G. Wells—despised his father who neglected the family. Madalyn Murray O'Hair—intensely hated her father, probably due to child abuse. Albert Ellis—was neglected by his father, who eventually abandoned his family." Spiegel, 65-66.

<sup>17</sup> Spiegel provides a few cliff notes of Paul Johnson's sordid, *Intellectuals: From Marx and Tolstoy to Sartre and Chomsky* (New York: Harper and Row, 1988). Spiegel, 71-72.

unbelief is rarely *just* an intellectual issue: it is also moral and volitional. It's the adage: "A man's morality determines his theology." If one doesn't believe in a holy God, there's somewhat of a free pass when it comes to righteous living. While evidence and reason play a significant role in both evangelism and discipleship, I believe that acknowledging possible non-rational causes of unbelief may be a helpful to reaping a greater harvest.

### *Street Smarts: The Value of Cultural Awareness*

Scandals too numerous to list sadly result in a societal distrust of leadership in general, and the Christian sphere is no exception. To effectively communicate in this climate, apologists would do well to realize that many of their listeners are guarded against those who expressly or tacitly say: "Trust me." So, here's the uncomfortable truth: in the current cultural environment, the *apologist* may be the most significant aspect of his apologetic. For many, character and credibility precede argumentation. Trustworthiness clears the debris from the hermeneutic of distrust and opens a necessary receptivity to truth. The apologist's character is the showcase for that truth. Groothuis warns: "The bad man with a good argument is only half clothed. One may have a sword (arguments) but lack a shield (godly character), and thus become vulnerable and ineffective."<sup>18</sup>

To be clear, there is a difference between a personal one-on-one apologetics conversation and a public presentation. On a greater level than public, personal apologetics rises and falls with one's ability to relationally connect with others in a meaningful way. Personal skills cannot be overestimated for disarming bias against Christianity. Respectful demeanor and integrity are indispensable.

---

<sup>18</sup> Groothuis, 37.

Awareness of current scholarship is crucial to engage with professional academics, but regular interaction with regular folks may be the secret sauce of truly persuasive apologetics. Such a simple suggestion may appear as less than scholarly, but the Christian apologist is ultimately characterized by the humility of Christ who made it a point not only to associate with but also effectively communicate to societal outcasts. Christian apologists, in order to be true to their name, should follow suit.

How should apologists bridge such a gap? Schaeffer suggests: “I try to approach every problem as though I were not a Christian and see what the answer would be.”<sup>19</sup> Smart thinkers listen and those who listen grow smarter and wiser. Listening trains us. The degree to which we intently lean into what others are saying, is one of the most accurate barometers of our love for others and our effectiveness in helping them come to know Jesus.

If not exercised with appropriate humility, apologetics can become an idol and the persons for whom apologetics is intended to reach become mere props of the apologist’s veiled self-promotion. Persuasive apologetics involves directly addressing objections while remembering there may be other factors at play. Apologetic tactics should be servants rather than masters. Learn the traditional methods but adapt them to the person or group. This is the entire point of eclectic apologetics.

### Undercutting defeaters

Undercutting defeaters serve as a sort of intellectual Aikido, using the opponent’s force against them. So, what are UCDs and why are they important? First, let’s understand the two

---

<sup>19</sup> Francis A. Schaeffer, “How I Have Come to Write My Books,” *Introduction to Francis Schaeffer* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1974), 35. In Groothuis, 21.

main types of defeaters and why UCDs are particularly effective in the current cultural environment. Rebutting defeaters directly attack the conclusion, whereas UCDs bypass the conclusion “and in some way undercut” the reasons for believing that particular conclusion.<sup>20</sup> In other words, it undermines the entire thought process that birthed the false belief. Why do I focus on UCDs? Because without them we may just end up playing a game of intellectual whack-a-mole.

A person’s worldview needs to be destabilized before compelling evidence for the truth of biblical Christianity finds deep receptivity. One of my friends leads a large successful business and teaches his team: “When you choose to work on the hard stuff, you know you are dealing with the real stuff.”<sup>21</sup> Working on undercutting a false narrative of the world is dealing with the real stuff. Effectiveness in agriculture depends upon accurately understanding and treating the soil before reasonably expecting any level of harvest. The same is true of the human heart and mind.

### *Scenario 1: The Widow Maker*

We are familiar with Luke’s account of a group of Sadducees who crafted a hypothetical

---

<sup>20</sup> William Lane Craig and J. P. Moreland explain: “There are at least two kinds of defeaters. First, there are rebutting defeaters, which directly attack the conclusion or thing being believed. In the case above, a rebutting defeater would be a reason to believe *not-Q*, i.e., a reason to believe that the statue is not blue. An example would be a case where the museum director and a number of reliable, honest people assure you that the statue is grey. Second, there are undercutting defeaters. These defeaters do not directly attack the thing believed (by trying to show that it is false), but rather they attack the notion that *R* is a good reason for *Q*. *Undercutting defeaters do not attack Q directly; they attack R and in some way undercut R as a good reason for Q* (emphasis mine)...In different ways, defeaters can remove the justification for a belief.” William Lane Craig and J. P. Moreland, *Philosophical Foundations for a Christian Worldview*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2017), 145.

<sup>21</sup> Much thanks to my friend Bill Weisberg for this valuable leadership insight. Peggy Penjoke, “AD Members and Suppliers Celebrate Record Growth at 2018 Electrical North American Meeting,” *Associated Distributors*, November 8, 2018, <https://adhq.com/about/ad-news/ad-members-and-suppliers-celebrate-record-growth-at-2018-electrical-north-american-meeting>.



dilemma where a woman successively married seven brothers after each one died. Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection which may explain why they were sad, you see. The group asked Jesus: “In the resurrection, therefore, whose wife will the woman be? For the seven had her as wife” (Lk. 20:33). She sounds like the original Widow Maker. If she were alive today, no doubt the Netflix documentary about her life would appear under the “More like this” tab next to “Tiger King.” Think about being the 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, or 7<sup>th</sup> brother. Wouldn’t you have thought she might be slipping something other than creamer into the coffee? I chased this rabbit for a reason. The Sadducees were highly intelligent people. Dialogue, reason, and titanic memory powers were their everyday bread and butter. But don’t miss how the absurdity of their question reveals that the question wasn’t the real issue at all. Rather, it was their love of money and power. Their obsession with proving Jesus wrong, fueled their intellectual pride and moral obstinacy, is written all over this scenario.

Notice how Jesus responds: “The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage, but those who are considered worthy to attain to that age and to the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage” (Lk. 20:34-35). **Instead of giving a straightforward answer, Jesus corrected their presuppositions concerning the resurrection.** First, the question “whose wife will she be?” erroneously assumes marriage and weddings will take place in heaven. It’s a false premise. Heaven isn’t a sanctified version of *The Bachelor* or *The Bachelorette*. Nor will there be an awkward “Singles Ministry.” So, there is no need for the widow to worry about who she’ll call “sweetheart” for eternity.<sup>22</sup> Jesus corrected the question before answering it.

Second, Jesus goes beyond the snare of their specific question to undercut something

---

<sup>22</sup> Thaddeus J. Williams, “What You Can Learn from the Logic of Jesus,” *Crosswalk*, February 24, 2017, <https://www.crosswalk.com/faith/bible-study/what-you-can-learn-from-the-logic-of-jesus.html>.

much larger: “for they cannot die anymore, because they are equal to angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection. But that the dead are raised, even Moses showed, in the passage about the bush, where he calls the Lord the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. Now he is not God of the dead, but of the living, for all live to him (Lk. 20:36-37).”

Jesus fundamentally undercuts the Sadducees’ theological system by appealing to the common ground of the Hebrew Bible. On the one hand, the Sadducees didn’t even believe in the resurrection. On the other hand, Jesus sees their ambush and turns the tables on them by appealing to a proper interpretation of Moses’ writings in the Old Testament. The scribes then verbalize what everyone present was already thinking: ““Teacher, you have spoken well.” For they no longer dared to ask him any question” (Lk. 20:39a).

Why did Jesus take this route? Gullibly answering a question with a false premise could give tacit support to foolishness. Jesus previously warned the disciples against unwisely sparring with those who exhibit no desire for truth (Matt. 7:6).<sup>23</sup> Here, Jesus turns the hollow “whose wife will she be?” inquiry around on the questioners. **Jesus never let those who would use sacred truths as rhetorical bludgeons get away with it unscathed.**<sup>24</sup>

## Scenario 2: Buddha, Jesus, and the Four Sights

Siddhartha Gautama was a prince born in modern day Nepal around 623 B. C. He grew up in luxury, isolated from seeing any sort of suffering. One day, venturing outside the bubble of the palace walls, he witnessed an older man (aging), a person ravaged by illness (disease), a

---

<sup>23</sup> D. A. Carson comments: “Holy and valuable things should be given only to those able to appreciate them. No specific application is indicated, but we may remember that there is a time to speak and a time to be silent (Ecc. 3:7). God’s truth must not be exposed unnecessarily to abuse and mockery.” D. A. Carson, “Matthew,” *New Bible Commentary*, D. A. Carson, ed., 4th ed. (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1994), in *Logos Library System*.

<sup>24</sup> See Matt. 22:34-45; Mk. 10:2-12; Mk. 11:27-33; Lk. 11:37-12:34; 20:1-44; Jn. 18:19-24.

funeral procession (death), and a wandering ascetic who seemed happy despite his lack of material goods (want). This became known as the “Legend of the Four Passing Sights.” Visibly shaken, Siddhartha asked: “Is there any realm...in which human beings are freed from these facts of human existence?”<sup>25</sup> Thus began the Great Renunciation, where Siddhartha fled his luxurious life in search of answers to these problems. The question drove his quest: can anyone escape suffering and death?<sup>26</sup> Siddhartha became known as the Buddha.

Some contemporary persons may categorize this renunciation by Siddhartha as some sort of life stage-induced meltdown. You could imagine the Twitter comments: “He’s lost his mind! What was he smoking?” But the absurdity lies not in the search for answers but in a lifestyle that shrugs its shoulders at the pain, suffering, and death we see in the world. Numbing oneself with empty entertainment with no substantive thoughts about deeper things may be far more a sign of mental decay than forsaking everything in search of clarity.

So, this UCD against Buddhism is a bit different in that it is sort of a comparison between Buddha and Jesus rather than an undercutting of *specific* Buddhist claims. Given the nature of Buddhist thought, this seemingly modest counter may be more effective.

In a fascinating parallel, Jesus also encountered the Four Sights that triggered young Siddhartha’s “Great Renunciation.” Even from his childhood, Jesus had an overwhelming sense of purpose that guided His life. Whereas the Four Sights caused a worldview crisis within Siddhartha, Jesus cured the ill, healed the lame, and raised the dead. Suffering caused the Buddha to seek the safety of enlightenment, whereas Jesus embraced suffering and defeated

---

<sup>25</sup> Timothy D. Hoare, *Thailand: A Global Studies Handbook* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2004), 133.

<sup>26</sup> For a robust assessment of Buddhism, see, Keith Yandell and Harold Netland, *Buddhism: A Christian Exploration and Appraisal* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2009).

evil.<sup>27</sup>

Jesus doesn't seem shaken by the aging process (Matt. 6:27-30). Jesus is unfazed by common lightning rods of stress. Far from a debilitating anxiety, Jesus grounds his command to not worry in the nature of a personal, benevolent, and sovereign God. He cares for the birds of the air, seemingly insignificant flowers, as well as persons. Regarding disease, we may acknowledge Buddha's moral advancement over his Hindu contemporaries by providing care to an ailing abandoned monk.<sup>28</sup> We are morally warranted to acknowledge the moral praiseworthiness of such actions, although not salvific. Christians and all people of good will should applaud alleviating suffering and promoting human flourishing.

What did Jesus do when encountering disease? He healed people of their diseases (Matt. 4:23-24). While Buddha's acts of mercy were an ethical advancement in his day, Jesus showed his superior spiritual power by delivering people from physical and spiritual diseases.

Consider the sight of death, which drove Buddha to a lifelong quest for enlightenment. Jesus overturned death itself. When his friend Lazarus died, Jesus tells Lazarus' sister: "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this" (Jn. 11:25-26)? Jesus then stands before the grave and commands: "Lazarus, come forth" (Jn. 11:43). This wasn't the only instance where Jesus raised the dead. Speaking of Jesus' resurrection, the Apostle Paul notes:

---

<sup>27</sup> The writer of the New Testament book of Hebrews puts it this way: "Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery" (Heb. 2:14).

<sup>28</sup> "On another occasion the Buddha discovered a monk whose body was covered with sores, his robe sticking to the body with pus oozing from the sores. Unable to look after him, his fellow monks had abandoned him. On discovering this monk, the Buddha boiled water and washed the monk with his own hands, then cleaned and dried his robes... Thus the Buddha not only advocated the importance of looking after the sick, he also set a noble example by himself ministering to those who were so ill that they were even considered repulsive by others." "Ministering to the Sick and the Terminally-Ill," *Collected Bodhi Leaves: Numbers 122 to 157* (Kandy, Sri Lanka: Buddhist Publication Society, 2012), 141.

“Death is swallowed up in victory” (1 Cor. 15:54). Buddha tried to seek an escape from the constraints of morality whereas Jesus conquered death itself.

Regarding want, Jesus said: “Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head” (Lk. 9:58). Jesus laid aside the riches of heaven, not in a quest to find himself or solve enigmas about the universe, but to offer salvation to all who would believe in Him. The Apostle Paul comments on Jesus’ divine rescue mission: “For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God” (2 Cor. 5:21).

At this point, we see no small contrast between Buddha and Jesus. Where Buddha sought answers, Jesus said: “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me” (Jn. 14:6). We find in Jesus what is absent in Buddha: robust confidence and authority. Jesus saw the same sights but delivered people from them (disease) or outright conquered them (death). This is true Boss Status. Jesus carries himself like someone who owns the place. He’s not an explorer seeking enlightenment, but one on a rescue mission. The Apostle John explains: “The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil” (1 Jn. 3:8). For those seeking spiritual insight or who allow a place for spirituality in their worldview, would it not make better sense to lean in towards Jesus of Nazareth?

In Jesus, one finds salvation by a personal savior. Granted, Buddhists generally do not consider Buddha a salvific figure, nor do they see this as a shortcoming, **but wouldn’t a savior be better than a mere teacher?** Jesus’ authority over all things, including the power of death as evidenced through the resurrection provides the foundation for a warranted and reasonable faith.

Buddha taught that the key was to change your state of mind, a qualitatively internal exercise. In other words, look within. According to Jesus, the answer to the problems in the

world isn't found inside of us. Far from it. Jesus warned that looking within is like trying to find life inside a dried-up sepulcher (Mt. 23:27). Jesus also claimed something Buddha never would: "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Mt. 11:28). Notice Jesus' clarity: He and He alone is the burden-bearer and rest-giver.

Again, these are Boss-Level claims. Buddha merely taught, but Jesus delivered. Where Buddha suggests: "be ye lights unto yourselves,"<sup>29</sup> Jesus declares: "I am the light of the world. He who follows me shall not walk in darkness but shall have the light of life" (Jn. 8:12). The intellectual thrust of Buddha's philosophy was "to wonder about the inescapability of suffering and death."<sup>30</sup> Jesus' good news centers on his willing embrace of and ability to conquer suffering and death for all who would believe through his resurrection from the dead.

## Conclusion

Persuasive apologetics is a call to reach out to those "having no hope and without God in the world" (Eph. 2:12). Resisting the temptation of being roped into a game of "Who's right?" rather than a search for "What's right?" is crucial. Let us strive to improve our communication skills, read more, get up early (or stay up a little later). May we place our thoughts before critical thinkers in order to be sharpened. Because of what is at stake, let us seek the Holy Spirit's help in our verbal and written defense of the gospel. Let us seek to be saturated by God's love. Pray for your interaction with others to take the posture of Christ-glorifying humility. But let us never ever lower the high call of Jesus Christ. Go "Reverse Nike" and just don't do it. Selling out

---

<sup>29</sup> John C. Plott, *Global History of Philosophy*, vol. 1 (Delhi, India: Motilal Banarsidass, 1987), 90.

<sup>30</sup> Lawrence S. Cunningham and John J. Reich, *Culture and Values: A Survey of the Humanities*, vol. 1, 6<sup>th</sup> ed. (Belmont: Thomson Wadsworth, 2006), 175.

ethically or theologically is a losing investment. Be faithful to communicate the good news of Jesus Christ and let the chips fall where they may. Be courageous. Be teachable. Be humble. We all live in a broken world. We're all in need of redemption. We *can* all come to Jesus, the equal opportunity Savior.

## Bibliography

AintNoSunshine. "The Striking Zone: Why leg kicks are game changers in MMA." *MMA Mania*. August 22, 2011. <https://www.mmamania.com/2011/8/22/2373511/the-striking-zone-why-legs-kicks-are-game-changers>.

Acuff, Jon. "The Jesus Juke." *Stuff Christians Like*. November 16, 2010. <https://stuffchristianslike.net/2010/11/16/the-jesus-juke/>.

Amesbury, Richard. "Fideism." *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. September 21, 2016. <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/fideism/#1>.

Aquinas, Thomas. "Summa Contra Gentiles." *Classical Readings in Christian Apologetics: A.D. 100-1800*. Edited by L. Rush Bush. Grand Rapids. Zondervan. 1983.

Arndt, William, Frederick William Danker, and Walter Bauer. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature*. Third edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.

Augustine. *The Confessions of St. Augustine: Modern English Version*. Grand Rapids: Spire, 2008.

Athanasius. "On the Incarnation." *Classical Readings in Christian Apologetics: A.D. 100-1800*. Edited by L. Rush Bush. Grand Rapids. Zondervan. 1983.

Athenagoras "A Plea for the Christians." *Classical Readings in Christian Apologetics: A.D. 100-1800*. Edited by L. Rush Bush. Grand Rapids. Zondervan. 1983.

Baggett, David. "Morality and Christian Theism." *Moral Apologetics*. June 28, 2017. <http://moralapologetics.com/morality-and-christian-theism/>.

Baggett, David and Jerry Walls. *God and Cosmos: Moral Truth and Human Meaning*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Good God: The Theistic Foundations of Morality*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.

Baker, Deane-Peter. Editor. *Alvin Plantinga: Contemporary Philosophy in Focus* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007).



Barnett, Paul. *The Birth of Christianity: The First Twenty Years*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2005.

Barth, Karl. *Church Dogmatics: The Doctrine of God*. Volume 2. Part 1. Translated by G. W. Bromiley. Edited by G. W. Bromiley and T. F. Torrance. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2010.

Beilby, James K. *Thinking About Christian Apologetics: What It Is and Why We Do It*. Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2011.

Berkhof, Louis. *Introduction to Systematic Theology*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1932.

Blomberg, Craig L. "John." *CSB Apologetics Study Bible*. Edited by Ted Cabal. Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2017.

Boa, Kenneth D. and Robert M. Bowman, Jr. *Faith Has Its Reasons: Integrative Approaches to Defending the Christian Faith*. Colorado Springs: Biblica Publishing, 2005.

Boldizar, Todd. "The 40 Worst Cheaters in Sports History." *Bleacher Report*. December 9, 2010. <https://bleacherreport.com/articles/537712-the-40-worst-cheaters-in-sports-history>.

Borchet, Gerald L. *The New American Commentary: John 1-11*. Volume 25A. Nashville: B&H, 1996.

Brodie, Bernard and Fawn M. *From Crossbow to H-Bomb: The Evolution of the Weapons and Tactics of Warfare*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1973.

Brooks, David. "The Neural Buddhists." *The New York Times*. May 13, 2008. <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/05/13/opinion/13brooks.html>.

Bruce, F. F. *The New Testament Documents: Are They Reliable?* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1967.

Bryant, Edwin Francis. *Krishna: A Sourcebook*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Bultmann, Rudolph. *Kerygma and Myth: A Theological Debate*. Volume 2. Edited by Austen Farrer and Hans Werner Bartsch. London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1953.

\_\_\_\_\_. *New Testament and Mythology and Other Basic Writings*. Edited and translated by Schubert Ogden. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984.

Bush, Jared. *Moana*. 2016. [https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/moana\\_2016](https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/moana_2016).

Bush, L. Russ. "The Rest of the Story: A Bibliographical Essay on Apologetic Writing in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries." *Classical Readings in Christian Apologetics: A.D. 100-1800*. Edited by L. Russ Bush. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1983.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Advancement: Keeping the Faith in an Evolutionary Age*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2001.

Calvin, John. *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. Translated by Ford Lewis Battles. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1960.

Carlin, Dan. "Supernova in the East I." *Hardcore History*. July 14, 2018.  
<https://podcasts.apple.com/ca/podcast/show-62-supernova-in-the-east-i/id173001861?i=1000415837465>

Carter, Joe. "FactChecker: Are All Christian Denominations in Decline?" *The Gospel Coalition*. March 17, 2015.  
<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/factchecker-are-all-christian-denominations-in-decline/>

Carter, Joe and John Coleman. *How to Argue Like Jesus: Learning Persuasion from History's Greatest Communicator*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2009.

Carson, D. A. "Matthew." *New Bible Commentary*. Edited by D. A. Carson. Fourth edition. Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity Press, 1994. *Logos Library System*.

Clark, David K. *To Know and Love God*. Chicago: Wheaton, 2003.

Clark, Kelly James. "Reformed Epistemology Apologetics." *Five Views on Christian Apologetics*. Edited by Steven B. Cowan and Stanley N. Gundry. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000.

Conze, Edward. *Buddhist Scriptures*. Translated by Edward Conze. New York: Penguin Books, 1959.

Coombe, Matthew J. Presentation "Utilizing Presuppositional Apologetics for the Purposes of formulating Theological Method." THEO 900: Theological Methodology. Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, Lynchburg, Virginia, April 12, 2012.

Coombe, Matthew J. Presentation. "Presupposition and Apologetic Method." THEO 900: Theological Methodology. Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, Lynchburg, VA. April 11, 2012.

Copan, Paul. *Is God a Moral Monster? Making Sense of the Old Testament God*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011.

Copan, Paul and Matthew Flannagan. *Did God Really Command Genocide?: Coming to Terms with the Justice of God*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2014.

Corduan, Winfried. *Neighboring Faiths: A Christian Introduction to World Religions*. Second

edition. Downers Grove, IVP Academic, 2012.

Craig, William Lane. "Doctrine of Revelation (Part 1)." *Reasonable Faith*.  
<http://www.reasonablefaith.org/defenders-3-podcast/transcript/t02-01>.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Does God Slam Doors Shut?" *Reasonable Faith Podcast*. October 19, 2009.  
<http://www.reasonablefaith.org/does-god-slam-doors-shut>.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Reasonable Faith: Christian Truth and Apologetics*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2008.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Only Wise God: The Compatibility of Divine Foreknowledge and Human Freedom*. Eugene: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1999.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Problem of Evil." *Reasonable Faith*,  
<http://www.reasonablefaith.org/the-problem-of-evil>.

\_\_\_\_\_. "What is the Meaning of Failure for the Christian?" *Johnson Ferry Baptist Church*. January 1, 2007. [https://youtu.be/n9Ui\\_Dk\\_x34](https://youtu.be/n9Ui_Dk_x34).

\_\_\_\_\_ and Frank Zindler. *The Great Debate: Atheism vs. Christianity*. 1993: Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994. VHS.

\_\_\_\_\_ and J. P. Moreland. *Philosophical Foundations for a Christian Worldview*. Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2003.

\_\_\_\_\_ and Peter Atkins, "What is the Evidence For/Against the Existence of God." William F. Buckley Jr., Moderator. 1998. Norcross, GA: Ravi Zacharias International Ministries, 2006. DVD.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3vnjNbe5lyE>.

Cunningham, Lawrence S. and John J. Reich. *Culture and Values: A Survey of the Humanities*. Volume 1. Sixth edition. Belmont: Thomson Wadsworth, 2006.

Dart, John. "Rumor of Atheist Airwave Attack Persists: Broadcasting: A false rumor that Madalyn Murray O'Hair is petitioning the FCC ban all religious programming is 15 years old." *Los Angeles Times*. April 14, 1990. <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1990-04-14-ss-1129-story.html>.

Davis, Alfred C. W. "Understanding and Healing the Father Wound." *Focus on the Family*.  
<https://www.focusonthefamily.ca/content/understanding-and-healing-the-father-wound>.

Dembski, William A. *The Design Inference: Eliminating Chance through Small Probabilities*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The End of Christianity: Finding a Good God in an Evil World*. Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2009.

Djaballah, Amar. "Jesus in Islam." *The Southern Baptist Journal of Theology*. Volume 8. Number 1. Spring 2004.

<https://equip.sbts.edu/publications/journals/journal-of-theology/sbjt-81-spring-2004/jesus-in-islam/>.

"Does Likeability Matter?" *National Public Radio*. October 7, 2012.

<http://www.npr.org/2012/10/07/162480455/presidential-politics-does-likeability-matter>.

Doyle, Sir Arthur Conan. *A Study in Scarlet*. Madison, WI: Cricket House Books, 2010.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Problem of Thor Bridge." *The Complete Sherlock Holmes*. New York: Barnes & Noble Classics, 2003.

Easton, Matthew G. *Easton's Bible Dictionary*. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1893. In *Logos Library System*.

Edwards, Jonathan. "Their Object, Is the Excellency of Divine Things." *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*. Volume 1. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2005.

"Epistemology." *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. March 11, 2009.

<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/religion-epistemology/>.

*Essais*. Paris: Gallimard. 1965.

Ferrell, Will. *Elf*. Directed by Jon Favreau. 2003.

Fortson, S. Donald III and Rollin G. Grams. *Unchanging Witness: The Consistent Christian Teaching on Homosexuality in Scripture and Tradition*. Nashville: B&H Academic, 2016.

France, R. T. "Development in New Testament Christology." *Themelios*. Volume 18. 1992.

Franke, John R. *The Character of Theology: A Postconservative Evangelical Approach: An Introduction to its Nature, Task, and Purpose*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005.

Geisler, Norman L. "Kierkegaard, Søren." *Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999.

Gold, Ann G. & Wendy Doniger. "Karma, samsara, and moksha." *Encyclopedia Britannica*. August 14, 2019. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Hinduism>.

Grant, Michael. *Jesus; An Historian's Review of the Gospels*. New York: Scribner's, 1977.

Groothuis, Douglas. *Christian Apologetics: A Comprehensive Case for Biblical Faith*. Downers

Grove: IVP Academic, 2011.

Habermas, Gary R. *Dealing With Doubt*. Chicago: Moody, 1990.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Evidence for Jesus' Death, Burial, and Resurrection." *Gary Habermas.com*. [https://www.garyhabermas.com/video/KaboomSummits\\_ResurrectionCumulativeCaseVideo.mp4](https://www.garyhabermas.com/video/KaboomSummits_ResurrectionCumulativeCaseVideo.mp4).

\_\_\_\_\_. "Miracles." Lecture. PhD Seminar. APOL 920: Miracles, Liberty University, Lynchburg, Virginia. February 18-22, 2013.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Historical Jesus: Ancient Evidence for the Life of Christ*. Joplin, MO: College Press, 1996.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Risen Jesus and Future Hope*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003.

Habermas, Gary R. and R. Douglas Geivett. David Hume. "Of Miracles." *In Defense of Miracles*. Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 1997.

Hamer, Alexander. "Battles that Shaped History: Vienna." *Real History*. September 4, 2017. <https://realhistory.co/2017/09/04/battle-of-vienna/>.

Haneef, Suzanne. *What Everyone Should Know About Islam and Muslims*. Chicago: Kazi Publications, 1979.

Hare, John E. *God's Command*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015.

Haskell, David. "Liberal churches are dying. But conservative churches are thriving." *Washington Post*, January 4, 2017. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/posteverything/wp/2017/01/04/liberal-churches-are-dying-but-conservative-churches-are-thriving/>.

Healy, Nicholas M. *Church, World and the Christian Life: Practical-Prophetic Ecclesiology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

Henderson, Charles Richmond. "Christianity and Children." *The Biblical World*. Volume 8. Number 6. December 1896.

Henry, Carl F. H. *Remaking the Modern Mind*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1946.

Hoare, Timothy D. *Thailand: A Global Studies Handbook*. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2004.

Hoffer, Eric. *The Passionate State of Mind*. Titusville, NJ: Hopewell, 2006.

Hoover, A. J. *The Case for Christian Theism: An Introduction to Apologetics*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1976.

Horne, Mark. "Presumptuous presuppositions: The Apologetics of Cornelius Van Til." *Christianity Today* Volume 40. Number 2. February 5, 1996.

Hume, David. *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*. Volume XXXVII. Part 3. The Harvard Classics. New York: P. F. Collier & Son, 1914.

\_\_\_\_\_. *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals: Oxford Philosophical Texts*. Edited by Tom L. Beauchamp. Oxford University Press: New York, 1998.

Japanese: "Self-disembowelment."  
<https://www.britannica.com/topic/seppuku>.

Jastrow, Robert. *God and the Astronomers*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company Inc., 1992.

Johnson, Luke Timothy. *The Creed: What Christians Believe and Why it Matters*. New York: Doubleday, 2005.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Historical Jesus: Five Views*. Edited by James K. Beilby and Paul Rhodes Eddy. Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2009.

Johnson, Paul. *Intellectuals: From Marx and Tolstoy to Sartre and Chomsky*. New York: Harper and Row, 1988.

Johnson, Phillip. *Darwin on Trial*. Downers Grove: IVP Books, 1993.

Kaiser, Walter C. Jr., Peter H. Davids, F. F. Bruce, and Manfred Brauch. *Hard Sayings of the Bible*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1996.

Kaufman, Gordon. "What Shall We Do with the Bible?" *Interpretation*. Volume 25. Number 95. 1971.

Kaufman, Michael T. *1968*. New York: The New York Times, 2009.

Keener, Craig S. *Miracles: The Credibility of the New Testament Accounts*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011.

Kennedy, D. J. "St. Thomas Aquinas." in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*. Volume 14. Online edition. Kevin Knight, 2002.

Kierkegaard, Soren. *Works of Love*. Edited and translated by Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong. Princeton University Press: Princeton, 1995.

Kitcher, Philip. *Life beyond Faith: The Case for Secular Humanism*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Living with Darwin*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Ethical Project*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011.

Koukl, Greg. *Tactics: A Game Plan for Discussing Your Christian Convictions*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009.

Kreeft, Peter and Ronald K. Tacelli. *Handbook of Christian Apologetics*. Downers Grove. InterVarsity, 1994.

Lane, William L. *Hebrews: A Call to Commitment*. Vancouver, B.C.: Regent College Publishing, 2004.

Lee, Bruce. Interview by Pierre Berton. *The Pierre Berton Show*. December 9, 1971. <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0767205/>.

Lee, R. G. Lee. "Payday Someday: TBT Sermons." *Danny Akin*. November 13, 2014. <https://www.danielakin.com/tbt-sermons-r-g-lees-payday-someday/>.

Leff, Arthur Allen. "Unspeakable Ethics, Unnatural Law." *Duke Law Journal*. Volume 6. 1979.

Lennox, John. *Seven Days that Divide the World*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011.

Lewis, C. S. *Mere Christianity*. New York: HarperCollins, 1944, 2000.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Miracles*. New York: Macmillan, 1960.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Miracles: A Preliminary Study*. New York: HarperCollins, 1996.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Problem of Pain*. San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1996.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Weight of Glory and Other Addresses*. New York: Macmillan, 1949.

Lewis, Gordon R. *Testing Christianity's Truth Claims: Approaches to Christian Apologetics*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1976.

Lickey, Adam. "Carl F. H. Henry's Presuppositional Theology and its Implications within Educational Settings." PhD dissertation. Liberty University Rawlings School of Divinity, Lynchburg, Virginia, 2019. <https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/doctoral/2046/>.

Licona, Michael R. *The Resurrection of Jesus: A New Historiographical Approach*. Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2010.

Lucado, Max. *Just Like Jesus*. <https://maxlucado.com/products/just-like-jesus/>.

- Machen, J. Gresham. "Christianity and Culture." *Princeton Theological Review* 11 (1913).
- Majumdar, R. C. *The History and Culture of the Indian People*. Volume 1. Bombay [Mumbai]. Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1951.
- Manton, Thomas. *An Exposition of John 17*. Evansville, IN: Sovereign Grace Book Club, 1958.
- Martyr, Justin. "First Apology." *Classical Readings in Christian Apologetics: A.D. 100-1800*. Edited by L. Rush Bush. Grand Rapids. Zondervan. 1983.
- Mathison, Keith. "General and Special Revelation – A Reformed Approach to Science and Scripture." *Ligonier*. May 18, 2012.  
<http://www.ligonier.org/blog/general-and-special-revelation-reformed-approach-science-and-scripture/>.
- McDowell, Josh. "Reaching a Postmodern Generation." *Enrichment Journal*.  
[http://enrichmentjournal.ag.org/199903/050\\_postmodern\\_gen.cfm](http://enrichmentjournal.ag.org/199903/050_postmodern_gen.cfm).
- McDowell, Sean. "The Historical Evidence for Jesus vs. Tiberius Caesar." *Sean McDowell: Bringing Truth to a New Generation*. May 22, 2020.  
<https://seanmcdowell.org/blog/the-historical-evidence-for-jesus-is-greater-than-for-caesar>.
- McInerny, Ralph. "Thomas Aquinas and Aristotle." *Twayne's World Authors Series* 408. (1977).
- "Ministering to the Sick and the Terminally-Ill." *Collected Bodhi Leaves: Numbers 122 to 157*. Kandy, Sri Lanka: Buddhist Publication Society, 2012.
- Mitchell, Daniel. "Science in Apologetics." Lecture. THEO 908/APOL 900. Seminar in Creation and Apologetics, Lynchburg, VA, October 23, 2012.
- Mohler, R. Albert. "My Take: The Bible condemns a lot, but here's why we focus on homosexuality." *CNN*. May 21, 2012.
- Moreland, J. P. Moreland. *Love Your God With All Your Mind: The Role of Reason in the Life of the Soul*. Edited by Dallas Willard. Colorado Springs: Navpress, 1997.
- Murphy, Gannon. *Voices of Reason in Christian History: Their Lives and Legacies*. Camp Hill, PA: Christian Publications, Inc., 2005.
- Nash, Ronald H. *Life's Ultimate Questions: An Introduction to Philosophy*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999.
- Nathan, Rich and Insoo Kim. *Both-And: Living the Christ-Centered Life in an Either-Or World*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2013.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich Wilhelm. *The Will to Power*. Translated by Walter Kaufmann. Edited by R.



J. Hollingdale and Walter Kaufman. New York: Random House, 1967.

Nixon, R. E. "Glory." *New Bible Dictionary*. Edited by D. R. W. Wood, I. H. Marshall, A. R. Millard, J. I. Packer, and D. J. Wiseman. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996. In *Logos Library System*.

Owen, H. P. "Morality and Christian Theism." *Religious Studies*. Volume 20. Number 1. March 1984.

Pailin, David A. *The Anthropological Character of Theology: Conditioning Theological Understanding*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990.

Pappu, S. S. Rama Rao. "Hindu Ethics." *Contemporary Hinduism: Ritual, Culture, and Practice*." Edited by Robin Rinehart. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO Inc., 2004.

Pearcey, Nancy. *Love Thy Body*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2018.

Penner, Hans H. *Rediscovering the Buddha: Legends of Buddha and their Interpretation*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Peters, Francis E. *Muhammad and Origins of Islam*. New York: State University of New York Press, 1994.

Plantinga, Alvin. *God, Freedom, and Evil*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974.

\_\_\_\_\_. Interview by Robert Lawrence Kuhn. *PBS: Closer to Truth*. February 27, 2011. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f7377jU2a8Y>.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Two Dozen (or so) Theistic Arguments." *Calvin College*. [http://www.calvin.edu/academic/philosophy/virtual\\_library/articles/plantinga\\_alvin/two\\_dozen\\_or\\_so\\_theistic\\_arguments.pdf](http://www.calvin.edu/academic/philosophy/virtual_library/articles/plantinga_alvin/two_dozen_or_so_theistic_arguments.pdf).

\_\_\_\_\_. *Warranted Christian Belief*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Where the Conflict Really Lies: Science, Religion, and Naturalism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.

Plato. "Sophist." *The Dialogues of Plato*. Translated by Benjamin Jowett. New York: Horace Liverwright Inc., 1954.

Plott, John C. *Global History of Philosophy*. Volume 1. Delhi, India: Motilal Banarsidass, 1987.

Price, Robert M. "Jesus at the Vanishing Point," *The Historical Jesus: Five Views*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2009.

Purtill, Richard L. *C. S. Lewis's Case for the Christian Faith*. San Francisco: Harper and Row,

1981.

Qu'ran. <https://quran.com>.

Rainer, Thom S. and Sam S. Rainer III. *Essential Church? Reclaiming a Generation of Dropouts*. Nashville, B&H Books, 2008.

Rand, Ayn. *Anthem*. New York: Millennium Publications. 1938, 2014.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Atlas Shrugged*. New York: Random House, 1957.

\_\_\_\_\_. *For the New Intellectual: The Philosophy of Ayn Rand*. New York: Random House, 1961.

Reynolds, Gabriel Said. "The Muslim Jesus: Dead or alive?" *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies: Cambridge University Press*. Volume 72. Number 2. June 2009. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0041977X09000500>.

Russell, Bertrand. "A Free Man's Worship." *Why I Am Not a Christian*. Edited by P. Edwards. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1957.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Autobiography of Bertrand Russell*. New York: Routledge, 2009.

Samples, Kenneth. *Without a Doubt*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004.

"Samsara (Hinduism)." *Berkeley Center for Religion, Peace, & World Affairs: Georgetown University*. <https://berkeleycenter.georgetown.edu/essays/samsara-hinduism>.

Satterlee, Allen. "It's Personal: Lee and Leslie Strobel on "The Case for Christ": The changes in Leslie led Lee to investigate Christianity to refute it." *War Cry*. <https://magazine.thewarcry.org/stories/its-personal-lee-and-leslie-strobel-on-the-case-for-christ>.

Schaeffer, Francis A. "A Christian View of the Church." *The Complete Works of Francis Schaeffer: A Christian Worldview*. Volume 4. Second edition. Wheaton: Crossway Books, 1982.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Escape from Reason*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1968.

\_\_\_\_\_. "How I Have Come to Write My Books." *Introduction to Francis Schaeffer*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1974.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Complete Works of Francis Schaeffer: A Christian Worldview*. Volume 2A. *Christian View of the Bible as Truth*. Second edition. Wheaton: Crossway Books, 1982.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The God Who is There: The Complete Works of Francis A. Schaeffer: A Christian Worldview*. Westchester: Crossway Books, 1982. *Logos Library System*.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The New Super Spirituality*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1976.

Sire, James W. *The Universe Next Door: A Basic Worldview Catalog*. Fifth edition. Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2009.

Smith, C. Fred. *Developing a Biblical Worldview: Seeing Things God's Way*. Nashville: B&H Academic, 2015.

Smith, Steven W. *Recapturing the Voice of God: Shaping Sermons Like Scripture*. Nashville: B&H Academic, 2015.

Solzhenitsyn, Aleksandr. *The Gulag Archipelago*. New York: Harper & Row, 1974.

Spiegel, James. *The Making of an Atheist: How Immorality Leads to Unbelief*. Chicago: Moody, 2010.

Sproul, R. C. "Is the Church Full of Hypocrites?" *Ligonier*. October 1, 2009.  
<https://www.ligonier.org/learn/articles/church-full-hypocrites/>.

Spurgeon, Charles H. *Finding Peace in Life's Storms*. New Kensington, PA: Whitaker House, 1997.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Immutability of God." *The Spurgeon Center for Biblical Preaching at Midwestern Seminary*.  
<https://www.spurgeon.org/resource-library/sermons/the-immutability-of-god/#flipbook/>.

Stackhouse, John G. Jr. *Evangelical Futures: A Conversation on Theological Method*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000.

Stark, Rodney. *The Victory of Reason: How Christianity Led to Freedom, Capitalism, and Western Success*. New York: Random House, 2005.

Stetzer, Ed. "Both-And: My Interview with Rich Nathan – What is the value of a church being a 'Both-And' church?" *Christianity Today*. December 10, 2013.  
<https://www.christianitytoday.com/edstetzer/2013/december/both-and-my-interview-with-rich-nathan.html>.

Stott, John R. W. *Your Mind Matters: The Place of the Mind in the Christian Life*. Downers Grove: IVP Books, 1972.

Strobel, Lee. "The Case for Christ." Lecture, National Apologetics Conference. Charlotte, NC, October 18-19, 2009.

Taylor, Richard. *Metaphysics*. Second edition. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1974.

Tertullian. *The Apology of Tertullian and the Meditations of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius*.

Translated by W. M. Reeve and Jeremy Collier. London: Newberry House, 1889.

*The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy*. 1978.  
[http://library.dts.edu/Pages/TL/Special/ICBI\\_1.pdf](http://library.dts.edu/Pages/TL/Special/ICBI_1.pdf).

Thomas, Bruce. *Bruce Lee Fighting Words*. Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books, 2003.

Thucydides. *The History of the Peloponnesian War*. Translated by Richard Crawley. Seattle: Amazon Digital Service, 2011.

Tolkien, J. R. R. "On Fairy Stories." Schuman. "J. R. R. Tolkien and the Significance of Fairy-Story." *Apologia*. Volume 21.  
<http://www.dartmouthapologia.org/articles/show/81>.

Tooley, Mark. "Mystery of Liberal Church Decline." *The Stream*. July 22, 2018.  
<https://stream.org/mystery-liberal-church-decline/>.

Vanhoozer, Kevin J. *The Drama of Doctrine: A Canonical Linguistic Approach to Christian Theology*. Louisville, Westminster John Knox Press: 2005.

Van Til, Cornelius. *Christian Apologetics*. Edited by William Edgar. Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed, 1976.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Letter from Cornelius Van Til to Francis Schaeffer." *Ordained Servant*. Volume 6. Number 4. Sheldon, IA: Orthodox Presbyterian Church, October 1997.

Ward, Bruce K. "Prometheus or Cain? Albert Camus's Account of the Western Quest for Justice." *Faith and Philosophy*. April 1991.

Ward, Keith. *Religion & Human Nature*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998.

Weisberg, Bill and Penjoke, Peggy. "AD Members and Suppliers Celebrate Record Growth at 2018 Electrical North American Meeting." *Associated Distributors*. November 8, 2018.  
<https://adhq.com/about/ad-news/ad-members-and-suppliers-celebrate-record-growth-at-2018-electrical-north-american-meeting>.

Williams, Thaddeus J. "What You Can Learn from the Logic of Jesus." *Crosswalk*. February 24, 2017.  
<https://www.crosswalk.com/faith/bible-study/what-you-can-learn-from-the-logic-of-jesus.html>.

Wink, Walter. "Write What You See: An Odyssey." *The Fourth R*. Volume 7-3 (May 1994).

Wood, David. "David Wood vs. Shabir Ally: 'Does Paul Give Us the Truth about Jesus?'" *Answering Muslims: The Islamoblog of Acts 17 Apologetics*. October 4, 2015.  
<http://www.answeringmuslims.com/2015/10/david-wood-vs-shabir-ally-does-paul.html>.

Wood, Robert W. "Tillich Encounters Japan." *Japanese Religions*. Volume 2. May 1961.

Wright, N. T. *Evil and the Justice of God*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2006.

Yandell, Keith and Harold Netland. *Buddhism: A Christian Exploration and Appraisal*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2009.

Zeitlin, Irving M. *The Historical Muhammad*. Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2007.