

# Every Believer Confident: Introducing Apologetics

## 1 Peter 3:15-16

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- Apologetics means: “to give an \_\_\_\_\_.”  
“to clear oneself of \_\_\_\_\_.”  
“to defend oneself \_\_\_\_\_.”  
“the art of \_\_\_\_\_.”
  - Apologetics is a natural part of \_\_\_\_\_ in which \_\_\_\_\_ to the gospel are overcome by means of reason and persuasion.
  - Apologetics is \_\_\_\_\_. –Scott Oliphint
1. The starting point of apologetics is a \_\_\_\_\_ that Jesus is *the* way, truth and life for every person (v. 15a)
    - No other belief system \_\_\_\_\_ a person to God
    - No other object of worship is \_\_\_\_\_
    - Every person you meet needs \_\_\_\_\_ more than they need anything else in the world

\* The best way to become an effective apologist is to know \_\_\_\_\_
  2. Confidence comes from \_\_\_\_\_ (v. 15a)  
Being ready to give a defense means:
    - Invest \_\_\_\_\_ to learn answers
    - Have a mindset of \_\_\_\_\_ to speak the truth
    - Have good reasons for \_\_\_\_\_ you believe what you believe
  3. Treat the unbeliever with love and dignity (v. 15b-16)
    - We don’t \_\_\_\_\_
    - Our goal is not to \_\_\_\_\_
    - Our goal is not to show our \_\_\_\_\_
    - Our goal is to \_\_\_\_\_
  4. Lead an \_\_\_\_\_ life so your words are backed by action (v. 16)
    - A clear conscience indicates a lifestyle of \_\_\_\_\_
    - This prevents unbelievers from rejecting the truth of the gospel because of Christian \_\_\_\_\_

# Understanding Unbelievers

## Romans 1:18-32

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1. Every unbeliever already knows \_\_\_\_\_ and some things about him (v. 18-21)
  - Every person is \_\_\_\_\_
  - Every person has the \_\_\_\_\_ knowledge of God
  - The \_\_\_\_\_ and his wrath against sin is clear, plain and well known by unbelievers
  - This knowledge of God makes the unbeliever \_\_\_\_\_ before God

2. Every unbeliever \_\_\_\_\_ the knowledge of God in an attempt to escape the accountability (v. 18-26)

Suppression leads to:

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Idolatry is maintained by a series of exchanges:

- The unbeliever exchanges \_\_\_\_\_ (v. 23)
- The unbeliever exchanges \_\_\_\_\_ (v. 25)
- The unbeliever exchanges \_\_\_\_\_ (v. 26)

The more an unbeliever exchanges the truth for a lie,  
the more God gives him over to further spiritual blindness

3. The unbeliever's suppression of the truth is part of \_\_\_\_\_ called a *worldview*.

[ A worldview is a commitment, a fundamental orientation of the \_\_\_\_\_ that we hold about the basic constitution of \_\_\_\_\_, and that provides the foundation on which we live and move and have our being. ]

# Pulling Down Strongholds

## 2 Corinthians 10:3-5

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*A wise man scales the city of the mighty and brings down the stronghold in which they trust. Prov. 21:22*

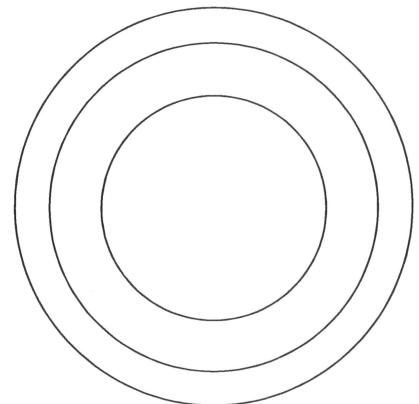
1. Challenge the \_\_\_\_\_ of the unbeliever's belief system
  - To destroy a stronghold is to reveal the \_\_\_\_\_ of the authority in which unbeliever trusts
  - Ask questions that \_\_\_\_\_ the person to reveal the foundations of their beliefs:
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Unbelievers typically rely on a misuse of the following "authorities":

- a. Science—only what can be \_\_\_\_\_ is fact. Religion is faith, not knowledge.
- b. Reason—only what \_\_\_\_\_ and society deem to be reasonable is true
- c. Philosophy—only what \_\_\_\_\_ in academic institutions believe is true
- d. Religion—\_\_\_\_\_ is all that God (however you conceive him) requires

2. Challenge arguments against the Christian worldview
  - Test the \_\_\_\_\_ of his worldview
  - Call his \_\_\_\_\_
  - Correct his \_\_\_\_\_ about the Christian faith
  - Show how the Christian faith can answer \_\_\_\_\_ leveled against it
  - If you don't know, \_\_\_\_\_

3. Press one of the buttons that get to the root of arguments against Christianity:
  - Epistemology—how do you \_\_\_\_\_ what you know?
  - Ethics—what is \_\_\_\_\_ and what makes them so?
    - ✓ Say, "If you argue for evil, you must believe in \_\_\_\_\_ that stands in contrast to evil. Correct? Good implies a \_\_\_\_\_ that distinguishes between good and evil. A moral law must have \_\_\_\_\_."
    - ✓ Ask, "How do you decide between good and evil?"



# Answering the Problem of Evil and Suffering

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1. We must begin with an examination of the assumptions behind the question
  - a. Suffering is necessarily \_\_\_\_\_.
  - b. People are basically \_\_\_\_\_ so that suffering is somehow unfair.
  - c. Evil and suffering cannot result in \_\_\_\_\_ that will make it worthwhile.
  - d. But also, there ought \_\_\_\_\_ to the events in the world and to the suffering of people.
2. Non-Christian Answers
  - a. Non-Reality of Evil View—Eastern religions (and some atheists) deny that evil and suffering are any more than an \_\_\_\_\_.
  - b. Weakness of God View—God does not overcome all evil because \_\_\_\_\_, even though he wants to.
  - c. Free Will View—Man has free will, and therefore, God has nothing to do with evil because he cannot \_\_\_\_\_ without impinging on man's free will.
  - d. "Christian" Fatalism—God is in control, and therefore you cannot \_\_\_\_\_. Just stoically accept it, because all things work for good. Actually, it's a blessing. It's nothing to cry over.
3. A Christian Answer
  - a. God is the \_\_\_\_\_ for his own actions, which defines justice, goodness, and love.
  - b. God does not need to \_\_\_\_\_ his actions to us (Gen. 3:12; Gen. 22; Job 23; 31:35ff; 40:4-42:6).
  - c. As fallen, finite, and created beings, we cannot \_\_\_\_\_ the reasons of a holy, infinite, and uncreated God (Ezek. 18:25).
4. An even better Christian answer is that God may have a perfectly good reason for allowing evil and suffering that we cannot know or comprehend.
  - a. The standard atheistic view \_\_\_\_\_ that God could not possibly have a good reason for allowing evil and suffering yet cannot prove that assertion in any way.
  - b. The Christian answer says that with man's limited \_\_\_\_\_, he cannot possibly know whether or not God has good reasons for allowing suffering.
5. Ultimately only the Christian worldview validates that suffering is genuine, yet not meaningless.
  - a. God \_\_\_\_\_ over evil and suffering (John 11:35).
  - b. God himself experienced the \_\_\_\_\_ to ensure an end to suffering.
6. Ultimately only the Christian worldview has grounds to call evil what it is, to see evil as really destructive and awful as it really is, and to provide hope for future judgment on those who perpetrate evil.
  - a. God \_\_\_\_\_ evil and has nothing to do with it (Hab. 1:12; Jam. 1:13-17).
  - b. Evil is the \_\_\_\_\_ of God and all he has made.
  - c. Non-Christian views \_\_\_\_\_ evil, fail to recognize it as such, or are unable to give distinctions between good and evil.
  - d. God ultimately \_\_\_\_\_ evil by the death of his Son, Jesus, who conquered death by his resurrection. We can overcome evil by copying his example (Rom. 12:17-21; John 11:25).

\*For more answers to the problem of evil and suffering see D. A. Carson, *How Long, O Lord?* (IVP, 1990), John Piper and Justin Taylor, eds., *Suffering and the Sovereignty of God* (Crossway, 2006), and Timothy Keller, *Walking with God through Pain and Suffering* (Penguin, 2015).