

MAT810 APOLOGETIC

INTRODUCTION

This course is written to prepare students to give a bold and biblical defense of the Christian hope. It is an aid to the work of evangelism and mission. It is my prayer that it will better equip them to bring every thought captive to Christ, to pull down the strongholds of Satan and to present the glorious gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. The course is divided into eight chapters and has three major parts. Part 1 (chapters 1-5) outlines the biblical apologetic method. Part 2 (chapters 6 & 7) deals with common problems and objections when engaging in apologetics. Part 3 (chapter 8) looks at the importance of history in theology and apologetics. The course teaches students the basic principles of defending the faith, how to graciously expose and exploit the unbeliever's deceptions and to give a full defense of the Gospel.

Apologetics is the duty of all Christians, and especially of church leaders. Therefore, all believers should be involved in apologetics.

Apologetics should be the special task of the elders and rulers in the church—those with a particular responsibility to lead. In the letter to Titus, Paul was seeking to build up the struggling church in Crete. His method was to encourage Titus to appoint elders in each city. The elders were to *“hold fast the faithful word as he had been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict”* (Titus 1:9). Titus was to appoint elders, and they were to defend the faith.

There are many benefits to studying apologetics. First, it helps us to better understand the nature of our own faith. It will strengthen us and makes us useful in the church. Second, with patience, skill, and practice, we can learn how to show the unbeliever the true nature of his unbelief and false reasoning, expose his unbelief; and therefore, bring him to understand his need. Third, apologetics leads to us humbling ourselves before God as we wrestle with the effect of sin upon the natural man and the need for God's revelation and special grace in bringing the Gospel. Finally, apologetics will help us to develop a coherent worldview—one that will bless us and allow us to offer hope to others.

Apologetics is not a distinct theological unit. Because apologetics builds upon and is related to other areas of theology, it is influenced by and will influence other areas of our theology. Apologetics' relationship to theology, mission and evangelism is particularly close. The interrelationship is evident in Paul's address to the Aeropagus in Athens.

In Acts 17:16-33, Paul is teaching theology, evangelizing, and giving a defense of the faith at the same time. This defense is consistent with his theology and is given in a mission context. It is important to see the link between our theology and our methods. Both our apologetic message and method flow from our theology and must be consistent with it. Apologetics is part of and must be consistent with every aspect of our theology. As we shall see, there is often a real inconstancy between theology and apologetic method.

We will learn through this course an important principle: Due to sin/the fall, man needs God's aid to understand and see revelation. Ultimately it is the powerful work of God in the Holy Spirit that must convince the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment.

As we enter, we grow in our understanding of the truth. We need to invite others to listen to our story, to enter into the story of the church and to enter into the story of Jesus. We need to invite them to come, to submit and to walk in it, rather than standing outside of it in judgment. God calls each one of us to defend the faith.

Learn more by purchasing the entire course that covers the following topics:

Lesson One: Introduction, The Types Of Apologetics, Jesus' Apologetic

Lesson Two: Fundamental Concepts In Presuppositional Apologetics

Lesson Three: A Personal, Holistic And Trinitarian View Of Truth

Lesson Four: The Nature Of Man, The Fall, Sin And Apologetics

Lesson Five: A Biblical Method Of Apologetics, Paul At Athens

Lesson Six: The Problem Of Faith And Circular Reasoning

Lesson Seven: The Problem Of Evil

Lesson Eight: History, Theology, Suffering And Apologetics