

- I. Christian Apologetics (Defense of the Christian Faith)
  - a. Why bother? Isn't God sovereign?
    - i. 1 Pet 3:13-17; Jude 3; 2Cor 10:5
    - ii. Difference between what God NEEDS us to do and what God REQUIRES us to do
- II. Classical Apologetics (Traditional Evangelical Defenses of Christianity)
  - a. Uses Evidence to "prove" God and Christian Scripture
    - i. Theistic Proofs (Philosophical arguments)
      - 1. Cosmological
        - a. Whatever begins to exist has a cause for its coming into being
        - b. The universe begins to exist
        - c. THEREFORE the universe must have a cause for its beginning
      - 2. Teleological
        - a. The universe shows evidence of order, THEREFORE there must be a designer of this orderly universe
    - ii. NT Canon Validity
      - 1. Compare to Ancient Classical Writings
        - a. Plato
          - i. ~1200yrs between original and copy
          - ii. 7 copies
        - b. Aristotle
          - i. ~1400yrs
          - ii. 49 copies
        - c. Homer (Iliad)
          - i. ~500yrs
          - ii. 643 copies
          - iii. 95% accuracy amongst copies
        - d. Greek NT
          - i. <100 yrs (1 Corinthians 15, all the names mentioned)
          - ii. 5600 copies
          - iii. 99.5% accuracy
  - b. Is evidence enough? Evidence = Proof?
    - i. Limits
      - 1. How far can the theistic proofs take you?
        - a. What kind of "Cause" or "Designer"?
      - 2. Data concerning the NT canon is only an argument from *probability*; it isn't decisive



- a.
  - ii. Post-Fall man is not morally neutral
    - 1. 1 Corinthians 1:18-25; 1 Cor 2:6, 14-15
- c. Distinctives of Classical Apologetics
  - i. *a posteriori* (Inductive reasoning)
  - ii. Scripture is not used as a starting point for apologetics. Begin by proving God's existence by appealing to general revelation or natural theology. After "proving" God's

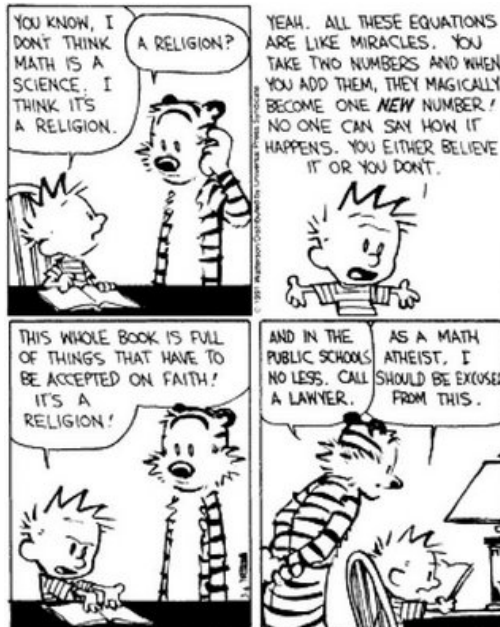
existence, use the facts of history, archaeology, science, etc. to “prove” the reliability of the Bible. Once you prove the reliability of the Bible, you can “prove” that it is inspired by God.

1. Assumes and argues from neutrality and common ground
    - a. Pastor Wade: What is the first point of Calvinism? Total Depravity
  - iii. Uses evidence to prove the Bible
  - iv. Man is the judge who determines what is true based on evidence
- III. A Better Way?: Presuppositional apologetics (Reformed/Covenantal Apologetic)
- a. WCF 7.1
    - i. I. The distance between God and the creature is so great, that although reasonable creatures do owe obedience unto Him as their Creator, yet they could never have any fruition of Him as their blessedness and reward, but by some voluntary condescension on God's part, which He has been pleased to express by way of covenant.
    - ii. God is transcendent Creator. We cannot reason or think UP to Him.
      1. Instead, He comes down, condescends and accommodates and reveals Himself through covenantal relationship
      2. We don't discover. He reveals\*
  - b. Distinctives of Presuppositional Apologetics
    - i. *a priori* (Deductive reasoning)
    - ii. Presuppose the truth of Christianity/Scripture and show that you cannot make sense out of logic, moral values, science, and the intelligibility of the world unless you presuppose this truth of Christianity/Scripture
      1. Assumes and argues from prejudice
        - a. Every witness is a prejudiced witness (Psalm 19; John 1:1-3; Col 1:16)
    - iii. Uses the Bible to prove the Bible



- a.
    - iv. God is the judge who determines what is true based on His Word
- IV. Presuppositional = Circular = Illegitimate?
- a. Is it possible to reason, think, learn, or argue without presuppositions and with complete neutrality?
    - i. If you say “yes,” you are *presupposing* this possibility.
    - ii. If you say “no,” you are *presupposing* this impossibility.
  - b. How do you know that a meter stick is really a meter in length?
    - i. Compare to your neighbor's meter stick?
    - ii. Compare to the ultimate standard of a meter stick\*
      1. But how do you know that this “ultimate standard of a meter stick” is really a meter? It's a matter of authority, not proof. “Who says?”
  - c. Every worldview/argument must have an ultimate, unquestioned, self-authenticating authority.
    - i. Every worldview/argument has an ultimate presupposition
  - d. It's a Matter of *Faith*

- i. Every person has faith in his ultimate, unquestioned, self-authenticating authority. Every person has faith in his ultimate presupposition
- ii. No thought is neutral, atheological, or without faith.
  - 1. We reason and use our minds to either sin or to the glorify of God.
- e. Classical Apologetics: Rationality is the ultimate criterion for truth (rationality = ultimate presupposition)
  - i. They *presuppose* that rationality is the criterion of truth and don't even bother to *rationaly prove* it. Who says rationality is ultimate? Rationality?
  - ii. Example: AJ Ayer's Verification Principle: If a statement is made that cannot be verified, then it is a nonsense statement and therefore irrelevant for life. "There is a God" was one such statement
    - 1. Is this statement/principle verifiable?
- f. What is more ultimate?
  - i. Rationality or Scripture?
  - ii. Rationality contrary to Scripture?
    - 1. Rationality only is what it is because God is Who He is
    - 2. Why does  $2 + 2 = 4$ ?



- a.
- b. Most people would say "It just does"
  - i. "Because it's always been that way"
    - 1. What power does yesterday have over tomorrow?
    - 2. What reason do we have to *believe* that what is true today will be true tomorrow?
    - 3. What are the chances that  $2 + 2 = 4$  tomorrow? How do you know?
      - a. Faith in chance?
      - b. Faith in God of order (God of Scripture)?
        - i.  $2 + 2$  *just is* 4 versus "I AM WHO I AM"
        - ii. GOD JUST IS
        - iii. GOD IS why  $2 + 2 = 4$
        - iv. Col 1:17

## V. Theological Presuppositions of Presuppositional Apologetics

- a. 2 Tim 3:16 (Authority of Scripture as God's Infallible Word)

- i. WCF 1.4-5, 9-10
  - 1. IV The authority of the Holy Scripture, for which it ought to be believed, and obeyed, depends not upon the testimony of any man, or Church; but wholly upon God (who is truth itself) the author thereof: and therefore it is to be received, because it is the Word of God.[9]
  - 2. V. We may be moved and induced by the testimony of the Church to an high and reverent esteem of the Holy Scripture.[10] And the heavenliness of the matter, the efficacy of the doctrine, the majesty of the style, the consent of all the parts, the scope of the whole (which is, to give all glory to God), the full discovery it makes of the only way of man's salvation, the many other incomparable excellencies, and the entire perfection thereof, are arguments whereby it does abundantly evidence itself to be the Word of God: yet notwithstanding, our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth and divine authority thereof, is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit bearing witness by and with the Word in our hearts
  - 3. IX. The infallible rule of interpretation of Scripture is the Scripture itself: and therefore, when there is a question about the true and full sense of any Scripture (which is not manifold, but one), it must be searched and known by other places that speak more clearly.[23]
  - 4. X. The supreme judge by which all controversies of religion are to be determined, and all decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, doctrines of men, and private spirits, are to be examined, and in whose sentence we are to rest, can be no other but the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture.[24]
- b. Rom 1:18-25 (What man already knows, but does with his knowledge)
  - i. Creator/creature distinction and relationship
    - 1. All people, even unbelievers, know God by virtue of their being made in the image of God and by virtue of His revelation.
  - ii. Sinful creature's response to revelation
    - 1. Suppression of truth
- c. Therefore all unbelievers live with this tension (Verse 21) (What we can expect amongst unbelievers)
- d. Apologetics is more of a MORAL issue than an intellectual one. (PREACH CHRIST)
  - i. Faith in creature vs. Faith in Creator
  - ii. Man is in rebellion.
    - 1. Logic and evidence won't save man.
    - 2. The gospel is the only power of salvation. (Rom 1:16)
- e. Offensive Apologetic
  - i. Push on this pressure point of tension
  - ii. Presuppositionalists don't seek to persuade the intellect like Classical apologetics
    - 1. They seeks to expose the inconsistency of self-trust (creaturely trust in the creature)

## VI. Next Week: Method and Application for Believer and Unbeliever

- a. WARNING: Presuppositional Apologetics is ***INSUFFICIENT*** to lead one to Christ
  - i. Merely a consistent approach in line with the presupposition of Scripture, which exposes the inconsistencies of unbelief
  - ii. No apologetic method can save. Only Jesus can save in accord with the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit
- b. Transcendental Method
  - i. Disclosure
  - ii. Homecoming

- c. Examples
- d. Using Presuppositional Apologetics on Ourselves in Sanctification