



# The Case for Christian Apologetics

## *Defending the Truth of the Christian Faith In a Post-Christian and Skeptical Culture*

### **A GENERAL OUTLINE**

#### **— CHAPTER 1 —**

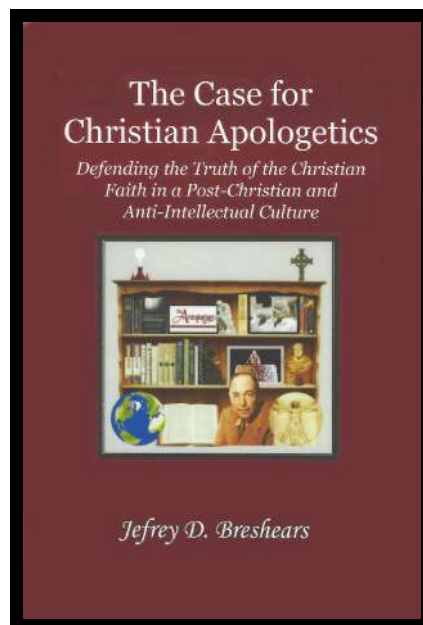
**The Case for Christian Apologetics**

#### **— CHAPTER 2 —**

**The Absolute Truth About Relativism**

#### **— CHAPTER 3 —**

**Some Common Objections... and Some Reasoned Responses**



# — CHAPTER 1 —

*“In your heart set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reasons for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.*

– I Peter 3:15

## A Preface

### The Truth Factor.

- The ultimate issue: Truth.
- Does the Christian faith correspond to reality?
- Theology and apologetics:
  - Theology: What the Bible clearly teaches.
  - Apologetics Why we should believe what the Bible teaches.
- The bases of apologetics:
  - Factual evidence (historical, archaeological, scientific, etc.).
  - Logic and reason.
  - Personal experience.
  - The testimony of Scripture.
- Two purposes of apologetics:
  - (1) To edify believers.
  - (2) To engage non-believers.
- Two fields of apologetics:
  - (1) Classical apologetics.
  - (2) Cultural apologetics.
- The value of apologetics:

*“Would you like to broaden and deepen your understanding of the Christian faith so as to more clearly and effectively explain and defend what you believe? Very simply, that is the purpose and the value of apologetics.”*

*“Apologetics can break down barriers by exposing erroneous arguments and irrational prejudices against belief in Christ, and by defending the historical and philosophical integrity of the Christian faith.”*

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## Introduction

### The Scriptural Basis for Apologetics.



- Matt. 22:35-39.
- Acts 17:2-4.
- Col. 2:8.
- II Tim. 2:23-26.
- II Cor. 10:3-5.
- Situational” apologetics:
  - Col. 4:5-6.
  - Prov. 26:4-5.
- I Peter 3:15.

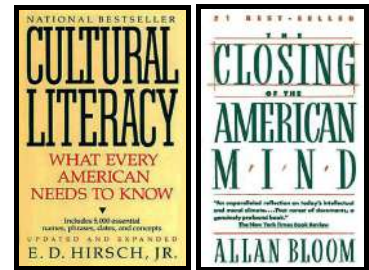
## The Problem

### Anti-intellectualism.

*“I must be frank with you: the greatest danger confronting American evangelical Christianity is the danger of anti-intellectualism.” – Charles Malik*

*“The scandal of the evangelical mind is that there isn’t much of an evangelical mind.” – Mark Noll*

- Few Christians ever share their faith with others.
- The reason: Most Christians are unprepared to deal with the arguments against Christianity.
- Scriptural admonitions:
  - Prov. 19:2.
  - Prov. 10:14
  - Prov. 4:7
  - II Tim. 2:15.
  - II Cor. 13:5.
- The dumbing down of American education.
  - E. D. Hirsch, *Cultural Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know* (1986).
  - Allan Bloom, *The Closing of the American Mind* (1987): “There is one thing a profession can be absolutely certain of: almost every student entering the university believes... that truth is relative.”
- J. Budziszewski’s faculty interview.



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- Christians are losing the culture war because we have essentially forfeited the intellectual war.
  - ▶ Ideas have consequences: What is intellectually respectable becomes over time socially acceptable and culturally normative.
- John Gresham Machen’s warning to the church in *Christianity and Culture* (1923).
- Peter Kreeft: The infection that is killing our society is secularism. Our crisis is a crisis of truth.
- Dinesh D’Souza on the Christian subculture.
- Charles Malik: “The greatest danger confronting American evangelical Christianity....”
- Mark Noll: “The scandal of the evangelical mind....”
- J. P. Moreland: “Imagine a church filled with people who are intellectually shallow, self-absorbed, and easily manipulated by the latest cultural fads....”
- C. S. Lewis: Christianity is only important if....”

## The Solution

### Wholistic Discipleship.

- Our LCD culture.
- Francis Schaeffer: The Lordship of Christ over the whole of life.
- In our multi-cultural and pluralistic society today, evangelism without apologetics is mostly an exercise in futility.
- The goal of the Christian life: Romans 12:2.

Francis Schaeffer



### Components of Wholistic Discipleship.

- Bibliology.
  - ▶ Developing a thoughtful philosophy of the Bible.
  - ▶ The origins, composition, divine inspiration, principles of interpretation, canonization, and the preservation and transmission of the Bible.
  - ▶ Why is it reasonable to believe that the Bible was divinely-inspired?
- The Historical Quest for the Real Jesus.
  - ▶ Are the gospel accounts of Jesus life historically accurate?
- The Inner Journey.
  - ▶ Exploring the depths of Christian spirituality and wholistic discipleship.
- Apologetics Foundations.
  - ▶ The evidence for the existence of God.
  - ▶ The factual and rational bases for the Christian faith.
  - ▶ Are science and Christian faith compatible?
- Alternative Universes: A Survey of Comparative Worldviews.
  - ▶ Comparing and contrasting a biblical worldview with other philosophies and religions.

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