

# **A STUDY OF CHRISTIAN APOLOGETICS**

Rev. Dr. J. K. Hans Trinklein, instructor

# I. **What's in a name?**



ἀπολογία

ἀπο- (“from”)

λόγος

(“logic, or reasoning”)

“a defense”

...the argument that lawyers  
would make for their client.

An ἀπολογία is

“a well-reasoned reply; a thought-out response to adequately address all the issue(s) that might be raised.”

(per *Discovery Bible's* word study helps)



Christian:  
Why are you  
still here on  
Earth?

Matthew 28:19  
“*Go and make  
disciples of all  
nations!*”

Something to think about



(Chinese goes here)

# **II. Should we even “do” Apologetics?**



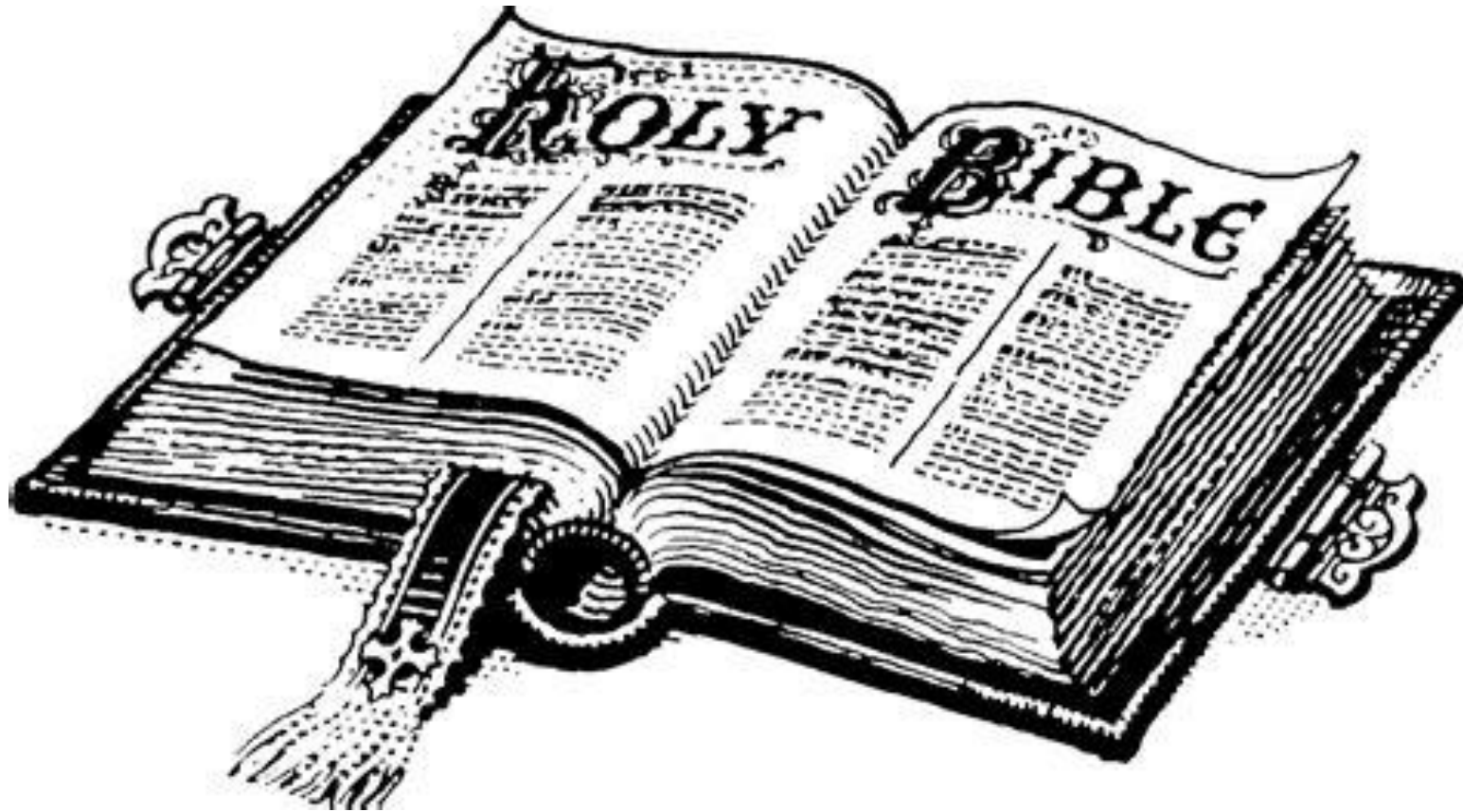




1) “You can’t ‘reason’ a person into the Kingdom of Heaven.”

2) Where’s the Biblical support for “Apologetics?”

# III. Apologetics in Scripture



# ἀπολογία in the New Testament

## 1 Peter 3:15

**“Always be prepared to give an answer (ἀπολογία) to everyone who asks you to give the reason (λόγον) for the hope that you have.”**



# ἀπολογία in the New Testament: Paul

## Philippians 1:7

“whether I am in chains or defending (τῇ ἀπολογίᾳ) and confirming the gospel, all of you share in God’s grace with me.”

# ἀπολογία in the New Testament: Paul

## Philippians 1:17

**“The latter do so out of love, knowing that *I am put here for the defense (ἀπολογία) of the gospel.*”**



# Αποστολική ἀπολογία in action



**Paul on  
Mars Hill  
(Acts 17)**





**Matthew 22:42**  
***“What do you  
think of the  
Christ? Whose  
son is He?”***



# Jesus and ἀπολογία



Mark 2:1-12  
The healing of  
the paralytic  
on his mat

# IV. But *how*??

- Who
- How
- Where
- What





# □ **Who needs to hear my “defense?”**

**1 Peter 3:15** □ *“anyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.”*

**Christians AND Non-Christians!**

□ **How do I go about doing it?**

*“One Size” DOES NOT “Fit all!”*

**But there is ONE thing you should always do:**



## 1 Peter 3:15-16...

<sup>15</sup> In your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. *But do this with gentleness and respect,<sup>16</sup> keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.*

# □ Where do I begin?

*Listen!!*

- What is their understanding of the world?
  - What's important to them?
  - What's NOT important?
  - What are their hopes and fears?
  - What are their “gods?”



Meet your people where they are, NOT where you *wish* they were!



**John 4**  
**The woman  
at the well**



**REMEMBER:** the people you talk to have spent a lifetime ‘investing’ in the world view that they hold.

Your ultimate goal in listening is...



# □ What should be my focus?

*Each situation will be unique, but keep in mind:*

**Some will be  
honest seekers**

**Some will be  
defensive arguers**

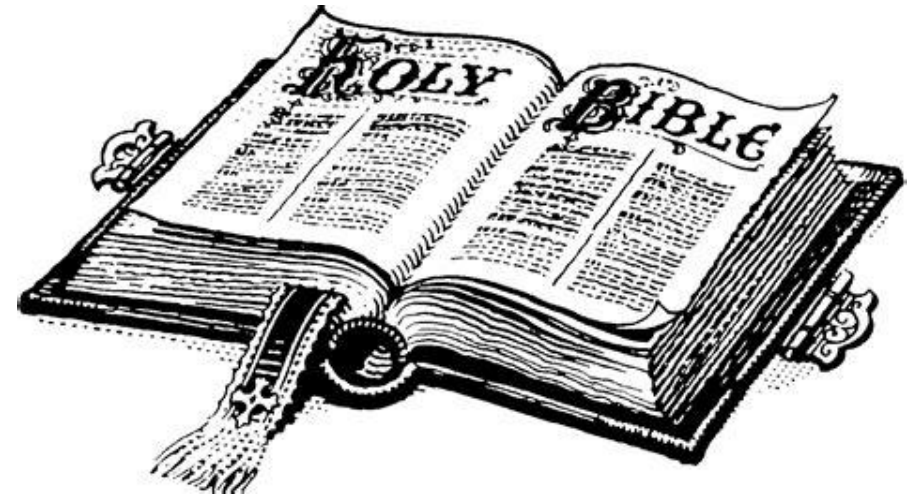
What is the ultimate, best focus, in  
Apologetics conversations?

**The life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.**

That's the heart of Christianity.

That's the key to faith!

# Bring them to the New Testament



## *Why?*

Because the New Testament (*specifically, the Gospel accounts*) are:

Number One:

Number  
Two:

# So, natural questions to ask are:

- **Are they true?** □ ?
- **Are they reliable documents?** □ ?
- **Do they *accurately* record what actually happened, and what was actually said?** □ ?



# The reliability of the Gospels



Look for good Apologetics books in your language!

“Evidence that Demands a Verdict”  
(鐵證待判)

by Josh McDowell (麥道衛著).

John Warwick Montgomery

# How do historians and scholars decide if an ancient document is “reliable?”



□ **Old enough?**

□ **Treatment?**

□ **External  
proof/disproof?**

□ **Any reason to think  
they're lying?**

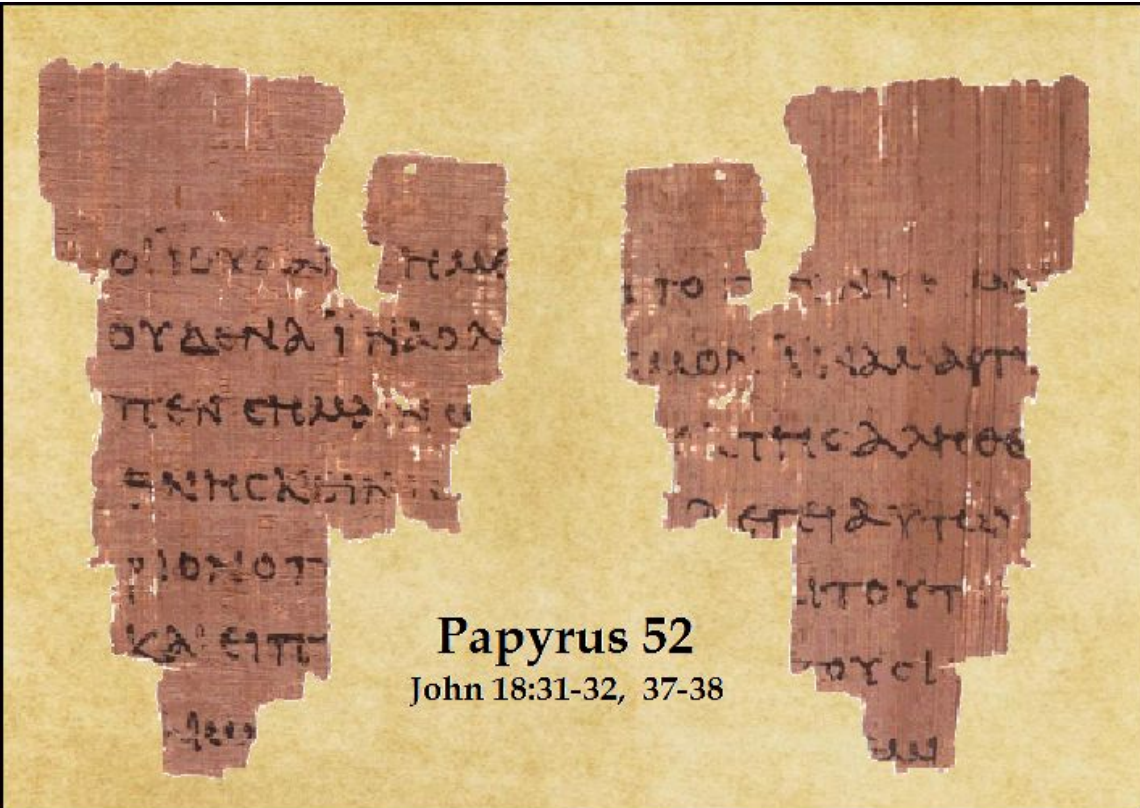
# □ Old enough?



**Oldest: John, ca. 125 AD**

**Matthew □ ca. 50-60 AD**

Irenaeus wrote that “Matthew also issued a written Gospel among the Hebrews in their own dialect, while Peter and Paul were preaching at Rome, and laying the foundations of the Church.”





# □ Treatment?



*The Biblical Archaeology Report* says:

**To date we have over 5800 Greek manuscripts of the New Testament, with an astounding 2.6 million pages of biblical text. While some of these manuscripts are small and fragmentary, the average size of a New Testament manuscript is 450 pages. Add to this the ancient manuscripts in Latin, Coptic, Syriac, Armenian, etc. which number in the tens of thousands, and you realize that there is an embarrassment of riches when it comes to New Testament manuscripts. No other ancient text can compare with the New Testament when it comes to the sheer volume of manuscripts, nor when we consider how close the earliest manuscripts are to the originals.**

# □ Treatment?



*CHINESE version of “The Biblical Archaeology Report says:” {if you want to!}*

# □ Treatment?



**Socrates 470 BC – 399 BC**

**Plato 427-347 BC and Xenophon 430-350 BC**

**Earliest of Plato's works: Only two fragments dated "BC"...**

**43 fragments between 1-300 AD...**

**No full manuscripts until 900 AD!**



# □ External proof/disproof?



**The importance of “hostile witnesses”**

**Archaeological and historical evidence**

**□ Any reason to think they're lying?**



**□ Internal defects?**

**□ External defects?**

**□ Would *love* cause them to lie?**

**□ Did they stand to *gain* anything?**

**□ Any reason to think they're lying?**



**□ A person will not die for something he/she KNOWS to be a lie!**

**□ Are there inconsistencies in the story?  
...Matthew vs. Mark vs. Luke vs. John!**



# CONCLUSION



*The Gospel accounts are reliable documents that present well-tested and well-challenged information.*

**The Goal of  
Apologetics:**

**Do not be afraid of challenges  
and questions! Either:**

# **V. Questions and Clarifications**

**□ Your greatest obstacles?**

**□ What objections do people make?**

**□ What's the Taiwanese idea, about...**

# **V. Questions and Clarifications**

**Do you have any questions for me?**