

Water-cooler Witness – Christian Apologetics in the Workplace

## **The Future of Evangelism**

*"I believe that one of the next great moves of God is going to be through the believers in the work place."* – Billy Graham

### **1. Why Apologetics?**

- Kerygma (preaching)
- Koinonia (fellowship)
- Didache (teaching)
- Diakonia (service)
- *Apologia* (defense of the faith)

### **2. Why the Workplace?**

- The largest un-tapped mission field in the world
- 98/95
- There is Biblical precedent
- The Sunday / Monday divide is at best, unhelpful, at worst, heretical

### **3. Apologetics Defined**

- "The defense of the Christian faith on intellectual grounds by trained theologians and philosophers" (*Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*)
- "In its basic sense, it is an apologia for the Christian faith – a presentation and defense of its claims to truth and relevance in the great marketplace of ideas" (Alister McGrath)

### **4. Jesus – A Model**

- "As the Logos, Jesus Christ is the epistemological foundation for our ability to reason. He is Jesus the Reasoner. As the incarnate Son of God, Jesus Christ is the prime example of how we should think...Jesus frequently argued by analogy, more specifically by
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what is technically called a *fortiori* argument" (James Sire)

- See John 7:21b-23

#### 5. The Apostles – A Model

- Paul – Acts 17 (more later)
- Peter – "Always be ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence" (1 Pet 3: 15b)

#### 6. The Rigourist Approach

- Tertullian; Van Til; Kuyper
- "Heretics and philosophers handle the same subject matter; both treat of the same topics – Whence came evil? And why? Whence came man? And how?...Whence came God?...Wretched Aristotle! Who taught them dialect, that art of building and demolishing...What is there in common between Athens and Jerusalem? What between the Academy and the Church? What between heretics and Christians?...Away with all projects for a 'Stoic', a 'Platonist' or a 'dialectic' Christianity! After Christ Jesus we desire no subtle theories, no acute enquiries after the gospel..." (Heretics VII).

#### 7. The Positivist Approach

- Justin Martyr; Calvin, Edwards
- "...I prayed and strove with all my might to be found a Christian, not because the teachings of Plato are contrary to those of Christ, but because they are not in all respects like them...Whatever has been uttered aright by any men in any place belongs to us Christians; for, next to God, we worship and love reason (*logos*) which is from the unbegotten and ineffable God...For all authors were able to see the truth darkly, through the implanted seed of reason (*logos*) dwelling in them. For the seed and imitation of a thing, given according to a man's capacity, is one thing; far different is the thing itself, the sharing of which and its representation is given according to his grace" (Apology II.x.iii).

#### 8. A "Blended" Approach

- Acts 17:16-34
- "God-fearing people"
- "Reasoned" with them
- "Proclaimed" the 'Unknown God'
- "The Areopagus sermon...illustrates the New Testament tendency to mingle *kerygma* and *apologia*, as the two aspects of a greater whole" (McGrath)

#### 9. Apologetic Assumptions

- Apologetics can begin "remoto deo"
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- We all possess the “Sensus Divinitatis”
- We all possess the “Imago Dei”
- Reason and nature “alone” are never sufficient
- The work of the Holy Spirit is essential

#### **10. The Big Questions**

- Does God exist?
- Is the Bible / revelation reliable?
- The “problem of evil”
- Materialist presuppositionalism
- Questions of doctrine and “ethics” (including sexual ethics), tend to be “second order” issues

#### **11. Workplace Challenges**

- The workplace is considered “secular”
- Witness and apologetics do not equate to “proselytization”
- Boundaries should be maintained
- Other traditions should be respected
- Dialogue does not equate to debate
- “Win the person, not the argument”

#### **12. Our Most Effective Tools**

- Love
- Joy
- Peace
- Patience
- Kindness
- Goodness
- Faithfulness
- Gentleness
- Self-control

#### **13. Break-outs**

- “I’m sorry I’m not myself lately, but my spouse has just been diagnosed with cancer. We’re devastated...”
  - “I don’t believe in God because there is simply no evidence to support his existence”
  - “If your God is so gracious and loving, why is there so much evil and suffering in the world?”
  - “Keep your religion to yourself. We’re here to make money – nothing else.”
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## **Ridley Marketplace Institute**

The Marketplace Institute is a bold new approach to bridge the divide between Sunday (church, faith, sacred) and Monday (marketplace, work, secular). With Ken Barnes as Dean, and Kara Martin as Associate Dean, the Marketplace Institute exists to engage business practitioners, church leaders, academics and other thought leaders. It is seeking to build the bridge of understanding and awareness through teaching, conversation, research and resources.

With the support of Converge International and over 80 donors, the Marketplace Institute is serving business leaders and workers in a wide range of vocations, including small business and professions, with a focus on the commercial environment. This initiative is inspiring Ridley to shape the theology of a new generation of church leaders that will empower workers and support their vocations.

The Marketplace Institute Mission:

- TO ENCOURAGE Christians to think biblically about work, worth and wealth
- TO ENGAGE with the marketplace in the formation of virtuous business cultures
- TO EMPOWER church leaders for effective workplace ministry'

**For More Information Please Visit: [www.marketplaceinstitute.org](http://www.marketplaceinstitute.org)**

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