

APOLOGETICS 101

Q: What does the word “apologetics” mean?

A: The word “apologetics” is derived from an ancient Greek word *apologia*, or *apologia*, which means...an apology. Not an apology in the modern sense of the word - which is to say you’re sorry for something - but rather an apology in the ancient sense of the word, which is...to make a reasoned defense of something or someone. In ancient times, the word apology referred to the case a lawyer would make on behalf of his client.

So, apologetics, is about building the case for our Faith...learning how to explain and defend our Faith. Basically, there are 3 types of apologetics: natural apologetics, Christian apologetics, and Catholic apologetics.

Natural apologetics builds the case for truths that we can know from the “natural” light of reason, truths that are able to be know without any divine intervention. Truths such as the existence of God, the innate spirituality of the human soul, the objective reality of right and wrong - truths which the articles of our Faith rest upon and build upon.

Christian apologetics, on the other hand, builds the case for divinely revealed truths - truths that cannot be known by reason apart from faith - truths such as the reality of biblical miracles, the divinity of Christ, the Virgin Birth, and the Resurrection to name a few.

Catholic apologetics encompasses all of Christian apologetics - since Catholicism is the fullness of Christianity - but Catholic apologetics tends to focus on those truths of Christianity that are not generally believed by non-Catholic Christians. Truths such as: the Catholic Church having been founded directly by Jesus Christ; the papacy; the Sacraments; the Immaculate Conception, and others.

Again, the 3 main types of apologetics are: natural apologetics, Christian apologetics, and Catholic apologetics...and in this course we will be focusing mainly on Catholic apologetics - how to explain and defend the truths of our Catholic Faith.

