

With an array of apologetic ways and means, the apologist's goal should be to describe God's truth, defend the Christian faith, and to advance those to whom he addresses to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. The engagement in philosophical conversation must be grasped by the proper understanding of truth, faith, and reason— amongst the most queried and debated topics of discussion.

The relationship between faith and reason: Beilby said, "Faith and reason are intimately related to a series of questions regarding the relationship between the Christian Faith and non-theological disciplines."¹ R.C. Sproul said, "Any discussion of faith and reason has to ask the question, "What is faith?" The biblical answer, according to the author of Hebrews, is that faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen (11:1). The author goes on to say that by faith we understand that the world was formed by the Word of God. The first thing we notice in this assertion is that faith is something that is substantial, not ephemeral. Secondly, faith represents a type of evidence. It is the evidence of the unseen. At the heart of the concept of New Testament faith is the idea of trust, namely, that faith involves placing one's trust in something. In this regard all human creatures are subject to depending at one point or another on faith."²

Groothius said, "For no matter how strong the case for Christianity may be, if it is not investigated, its verities can be neither accepted nor appreciated. As John Montgomery surmised, if the average person put as much time into investigating Christianity as he or she put into a college course on the humanities, most of these people would come to faith."³ True faith involves trusting in the evidence that God has amply provided in and through His Word. That faith is not without what Calvin called evidences; rather, it is a faith that surrenders to or acquiesces to the evidences.⁴

According to Groothius, the best method of apologetic reasoning is hypothesis evaluation and verification. The Christian worldview is taken as a large-scale hypothesis (or metanarrative) that attempts to explain what matters most. First, when we are commending the Christian worldview, we cannot transfer our own attitude toward that worldview to those who do not share it. To unbelievers, Christianity is not yet believed to be true. It is merely a possibility (at best). Second, a worldview—Christian or other-wise—should be put forth as a hypothesis because it presents itself as a candidate for the most important truths (as do all religions and worldviews). A worldview hypothesis is a broad-ranging theory of everything, in that it tries to account for the nature and meaning of the universe and its inhabitants. Thus, while the commendation of the Christian worldview is necessarily an intellectual enterprise, it should also take stock of the biases, prejudices, loves and hates that lie at the root of the human being.⁵

¹ James K. Beilby, *Thinking About Christian Apologetics: What It Is and Why We Do It*, (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2011), 88

² R.C. Sproul. Faith and Reason: <https://www.ligonier.org/learn/articles/faith-reason/>

³ Douglas Groothius. *Christian Apologetics: A Comprehensive Case for Biblical Faith*, (2018), 155

⁴ Sproul. Faith and Reason: <https://www.ligonier.org/learn/articles/faith-reason/>

⁵ Groothius. *Christian Apologetics*, 49

There are three methods of apologetics. According to Grootius, the evidentialist “argues that the most significant historical events in Christianity – particularly the resurrection of Jesus are matters that can be established through proper historical argumentation, even apart from any prior arguments for the existence of God.”⁶

The presuppositionalist view according Grootius originated with Reformed Christianity and rejects the tools of classical apologetics by accepting the entire Christian worldview and using this view to engage unbelievers. Grootius said, “The problem with this approach is it limits positive apologetics and claims unless a person presupposes Christianity, he or she cannot make any sense of the world morally, logically, or scientifically, since Christianity alone supplies the required conditions for these areas of life to be intelligible.”⁷

Beilby said, “Like presuppositional apologists, experiential apologists do not rely on logical arguments or evidences, but their reasons for rejecting an exclusively rational approach is different. They do not hold that the truth of Christianity must be presupposed; rather they hold that is must be experienced. According to this view, he added, experiential apologetics might also be termed a one-step approach, although this one step is experiential, not logical.”⁸

⁶ Ibid, 69

⁷ Ibid, 62

⁸ Beilby, Thinking About Christian Apologetics, 100