

Let's Make a Case

June 23, 2024

CLASS SUMMARY:

This class is an overview of the discipline of Christian apologetics. Christian apologetics involves making a case for the truth of the Christian faith. By addressing several topics, we will make a case based on rational arguments and evidence that the Christian faith is reasonable to believe.

OVERVIEW OF CLASS:

- What is apologetics and its purpose?
- The reliability of the Bible.
- A Christian Worldview Pt. 1
- A Christian Worldview Pt. 2
- Evidence for the existence of God
- **Who is Jesus?**
- Evidence for the resurrection

Who is Jesus?

“I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: ‘I’m ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don’t accept His claim to be God.’ That is one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic – on a level with the man who says he is a poached egg – or else be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God: or else a madman or something worse. You can shut Him up for a fool, you can spit at Him and kill Him as a demon; or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God. But let us not come with any patronising nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to.” (Lewis, MC, 55-56) Evidence that Demands a Verdict: Life-Changing Truth For A Skeptical World Josh McDowell & Sean McDowell, PhD

The “Trilemma” Argument

When Jesus makes a claim to be God there are only three possibilities:

1. Lord: What He claimed was true. He was God.
2. Liar: Jesus knew he was not God and claimed He was then he was lying.
3. Lunatic: He believed He was God, but was not. A measure of insanity is the size of the gap between what you think you are and what you really are.

LORD:

1. He fulfilled numerous messianic prophecies written hundreds of years in advance.
2. He lived a sinless life and performed miraculous deeds.
3. He predicted and then accomplished his own resurrection from the dead.

LIAR:

Liar doesn't fit the facts. Jesus lived and taught the highest standard of ethics. And it's unlikely he would have laid down his life unless he really thought he was telling the truth.

LUNATIC:

If Jesus thought he was God but really wasn't, then he would have been a lunatic. But lunatic doesn't fit either. Jesus uttered some of the most profound sayings ever recorded. And everyone – even his enemies – claimed that Jesus was a man of integrity who taught the truth (Matthew 12:14)