

Christian Apologetics

apologia 1 Peter 3:15

1 Peter 3:15; But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear;

Sanctify - ἁγιάζω hagiázō, hag-ee-ad'-zo; from G40; to make holy, i.e. (ceremonially) purify or consecrate; (mentally) to venerate:—hallow, be holy, sanctify. As used here in Peter.

Varied general uses, 1) to render or acknowledge, or to be venerable or hallow, 2) to separate from profane things and dedicate to God, A) consecrate things to God, B) dedicate people to God, 3) to purify A) to cleanse externally B) to purify by expiation: free from the guilt of sin C) to purify internally by renewing of the soul.

Heart - καρδία kardía, kar-dee'-ah; prolonged from a primary κάρ kár (Latin cor, "heart"); the heart, i.e. (figuratively) the thoughts or feelings (mind); also (by analogy) the middle:—(+ broken-)heart(-ed) **as used in 1 Peter 3:15;** the center and seat of spiritual life, the soul or mind, as it is the fountain and seat of the thoughts, passions, desires, appetites, affections, purposes, endeavors (so in English heart, inner man,

Defense - ἀπολογία apología, ap-ol-og-ee'-ah; from the same as G626; a plea ("apology"):—answer (for self), clearing of self, defence. 1) verbal defence, speech in defence 2) a reasoned statement or argument, verbal defense, speech in defense:

Why do we, as Christians, need to be able to give a defense for our faith? It seems to be the believer who is challenged to render the answer for the existence of God? To give (reason) for ones faith requires reasoning, of which we will look at in a minute. However, It is a two-way street, and as the believer lives by faith, so do atheists. Feds say OK to atheists on religion tax break, USA TODAY, August 20,2013. In a popular book printed March 12, 2004, it is titled, "I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist". Excerpt from the book, "To some, the concept of having faith in a higher power or a set of religious beliefs is nonsensical. Indeed, many view religion in general, and Christianity in particular, as unfounded and unreasonable."

Rationality or reason. There is a theological view point that for some reason, reason makes no sense. Fideism: reliance on faith rather than reason in pursuit of religious truth. The fideist says faith is all we need; if we look at it through reason, it is no longer faith. Can this be true? We find in many churches statements of faith that read "In Faith Alone," perhaps there is a misunderstanding in this, for in actuality, there are five Solas ("solos," meaning, "alones"). So is it in faith alone?

Sola Scriptura, or “God’s Word alone,” maintains that the Bible is the highest source of authority in a Christian’s life, the final court of appeal (though not the only authority: the Bible itself mentions governmental and other authorities).

Sola fide, or “faith alone,” affirms that justification—being made right with God—comes only through faith in Jesus.

Sola gratia, or “grace alone,” says sinners are saved as an unearned gift of God’s grace, “not as a result of works, so that no one may boast” (Eph 2:8–9).

Sola Christo (“solus Christus”), or “Christ alone,” emphasizes the exclusivity of Jesus’ role in salvation: “No one comes to the Father except through me” (John 14:6).

And soli Deo gloria, or “to the glory of God alone,” says that the purpose of creation, salvation, and everything—including our goal as Christians—is the glory of God, “that God may be all in all” (1 Cor 15:28).

Fideism is blind faith; a person has only faith and may not worry about any other means of understanding why. However, I would be willing to bet when asked about this faith, they surely would eagerly give a reason for how it works through them. James says, faith without works is dead, James 2:24. There is a misconception of what James was addressing, in its proper understanding and re-reading the verse, one should realize the person James was addressing sought to demonstrate his faith by his works; this is the reason for James's rebuke, I will show my faith by my works. The one who chooses the work that he will do does so on his own, thinking if he demonstrates good works, he will achieve approval; it is not faith that drives his deeds. The other will show faith in his works, a God-driven work that serves the body of believers.

I believe every believer has good reason for their faith; faith drives us to please our Lord and produce fruit from our labor. We know and understand that faith is a gift from God and a life-changing work. Outward signs of a person’s faith are accompanied by deeds in a world filled with hatred, selfishness, war, murder, and disrespect toward others; basically, every type of repulsive action that offends God shows the strength and conviction of the inward working. A bad temper is merely a description of an attitude. This word describes a person's actions at a specific time. The mother holding her newborn child after such pain in delivery demonstrates the power of love; in a moment, the pain is diminished once the child is delivered into the mother's arms. There can be no denying that these two emotions, pain, and joy, are related to inner actions in this situation. Most issues we encounter in our lives are described by words. Yet, words themselves are only substantive when put into action.

Suppose I take a piece of paper and draw a hammer on it that I might use to build a dog house. In that case, is it the mere word hammer in itself or a picture of one that gives me the ability to do what I need to be done. Take the same drawing and tell someone, “this is what I wish I could hit you with.” and the words now pose a threat or insult, as with pagan idols the person who is

insulted gave power to the inanimate object. Words and idols have no ability of their own. The person who believes in the power of pagan idols is the only power the idol has. Should a person fall into quicksand and calls upon his idol it is incapable of saving him.

One may say show me, God; again, the challenge is for the Christian. However, you decide to reverse the issue when you can reply, show me infinity, and I will show you, God. The idea is not to show disrespect but ask the curious to prove what cannot be proven aside from the deeds of faith. Perhaps this same person believes not in infinity, then what do you see as the boundary of space, and when you reach its borders what lies behind those?

Are you bold in your defense, or do you seek to shy away? Perhaps you stand silent and cannot find the words to justify your reason why you believe. At this point, your opposition may ask where your faith is. Although you believe, when asked why you feel stymied, you find yourself wanting to get away, the words are on your tongue but will not come out. In our carnality, we seek to answer a carnal question with a human rebuttal. This is wrong and only leads to defeat.

This often happens to us because too many things are running through our head all at once; as you search for this answer, you begin to wonder, what is this person going to ask me next. Perhaps you feel you do not know the bible well enough, or I know the bible, but what verse do I want to use. What verse do they have in mind? Does this person know the bible better than me? Sharing your faith with those outside the church can take you out of your safe zone; what to do? See **Matthew 10:19 - 20; But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.**

Slow down and collect yourself. Think of how it must have been for Nehemiah to stand before the king and give an answer to the problem confronting him. Nehemiah 2:1-2; "And it came to pass in the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when wine was before him, that I took the wine and gave it to the king. Now I had never been sad in his presence before. Therefore the king said to me, "Why is your face sad, since you are not sick? This is nothing but sorrow of heart." So I became dreadfully afraid,"

Nehemiah could have been put to death for such a sad face. He was the king's cupbearer, and to have a sad look was not permitted. Think of yourself in this position; if you look frightened before the king, most of us would likely be suspicious; not a good idea to look as Nehemiah did. In verse 2:4, as the king asks him to make his request it says, "Then the king said to me, "What do you request?" **So I prayed to the God of heaven.** Nehemiah was not stuck in quicksand, but his fate may have been worse. We have that same ability; we can pray in the moment and trust the Spirit to give us the words. The evidence of trust and faith shows in how we react when under pressure; perhaps you want to be like Joseph when seduced by Potiphar's wife, Genesis 39:11, you turn and run right out of your sweater to escape from the one who has grabbed you.

Please don't panic, it's a question, and the answer might be what the person needs to hear to believe. God may have put you right where you are in that moment for this very reason. Do not run from an open door.

When we study, I recommend that you first learn the lessons found in the bible more than anything else. Yes, it is nice to remember the verse addresses, but to a person just asking a simple question, it probably has no meaning; they might not even have a bible. I was terrified when I started Chaplain services; what if they ask me something I don't know? What do I do? Those quests did pop up from time to time, and I shook; oh, Lord help me. He always did.

Before we begin a word study in apologetics, I want you to think of the example I have given you numerous times. Telling this over and over in hopes that everyone might remember. True story, I will add just a little flavor; a girl was walking down the street in town with a happy air about her when a man stopped her and asked, "why are you so happy?" "Because of Jesus." The man, who apparently knew the bible, began to ask her some deep theological questions that would, or as he hoped to do, embarrass the girl and cause doubt. However, she was not moved or hesitant in her reply. Calmly and happily, she merely said, "Sir, I don't know any of that, but I love Jesus, and I know He loves me." She then went on her way. Who do you think was more perplexed, the girl who knew what she knew or the man who thought he could get one over on as Christian? Our challenges will come when we begin to confess Jesus to the world.

Acts 18:9-11; "One night the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision: "Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent. 10 For I am with you, and no one is going to attack and harm you, because I have many people in this city." 11 So Paul stayed in Corinth for a year and a half, teaching them the word of God."

Our faith and answers to know how and what to say when asked why can be as deep as any conversation or simple as expressing what is in your heart. Never try or think you can outsmart anyone clever because the best answer you can ever give is the one that is sincerely from the heart, not from the head. Your faith is your understanding, not another's; believe in yourself and trust in the power of the Spirit.

Before opening the door to leave the house in the morning... pray for God to open doors for you this day. He will never abandon you; He will not leave you speechless. If we are to bear fruit, there has to be a certain amount of courage and deeds of faith to be accomplished, it can be very challenging, and most of that is not the people you seek to invite but what is going on in your head. Look at others as friends you desire to share the word with. DO NOT COME OFF AS PREACHY but with a tone of concern, not in a sympathetic manner either, but of a genuine desire to plant that seed.