

Introduction to apologetics: facing atheism and agnosticism

What is going on in our context?

- Committed agnosticism, pluralism, all roads lead to God, no to exclusivism, no to hell
- New Atheism, rationalism, need scientific evidence,
- Question arising from terrorism and suffering

Read [Philip Ochieng, 'What God is this who revels in pain, blood and tears?', Nation, 21 Oct 2013.](#)

- How persuasive is this?
- What arguments is the author using?
- Are they sound?
- What sort of language is the author using?
- How much reference to Jesus is there? How would that make a difference?

Apologetics

1 Peter 3:14-17

- What exactly is the Christian hope? (cf. 1 Pet. 1:3-5)
- When are we likely to be asked about our hope?
- What is the *reason* for our hope? (cf. 1 Pet. 1:3-12; 3:18-22; 4:12-13; 5:6-11)
- How should we speak? Have you seen that done / not done?

Questioning

- Respectful, humble, sincere questioning
- Examine logic:¹
 - Is there a premise (evidence, basis, assumption)?
 - Is it a false premise or a fair premise?
 - Does the conclusion follow from the premise?
- Helping people see their own faith / presuppositions
- Helping people see the weaknesses / limits of their own faith
 - 5 Ms science can't give us: Maths, Metaphysics, Morals, Music & the Methods of Science itself ([William Lane Craig](#))
 - Offer something better
- "Tell me about the God you don't believe in"
- Why don't you believe? Why don't you attend church?

But the real problem

John 3:19-20; Romans 1:18; 3:11; Eph. 4:18

- The internet as a way to find the answers I want
- "If I could answer all your questions would you then believe?"
- Pascal's Wager to expose a hard heart

¹ For more on logic and questions see [Asking good questions.](#)

- Needs a miracle (John 3:3); need to hear the voice of Jesus (John 10:27)
- Introduce people to **Jesus** and what he has done (John 20:30-31)

Watch [this film](#)

- What is the point of the film?
- What are the heart issues going on here?
- Are there similar dangers in our culture and even among Christians?
- How could you apply the gospel into this context?