Christian apologetics

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**Christian apologetics** ([Greek](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_language): ἀπολογία, "verbal defence, speech in defence")[[1]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-1) is a branch of [Christian theology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_theology) that defends [Christianity](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christianity) against objections.[[2]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-2)

Christian [apologetics](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apologetics) has taken many forms over the centuries, starting with [Paul the Apostle](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul_the_Apostle) in the [early church](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Early_Christianity) and [Patristic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patristic) writers such as [Origen](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Origen), [Augustine of Hippo](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Augustine_of_Hippo), [Justin Martyr](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Justin_Martyr) and [Tertullian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tertullian), then continuing with writers such as [Thomas Aquinas](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Aquinas), [Duns Scotus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Duns_Scotus), [William of Ockham](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_of_Ockham) and [Anselm of Canterbury](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anselm_of_Canterbury) during [Scholasticism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scholasticism).

[Blaise Pascal](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blaise_Pascal) was an active Christian apologist before the [Age of Enlightenment](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Age_of_Enlightenment). In the modern period Christianity was defended through the efforts of many authors such as [G. K. Chesterton](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/G._K._Chesterton) and [C. S. Lewis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/C._S._Lewis), as well as [G. E. M. Anscombe](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/G._E._M._Anscombe).

In contemporary times Christianity is defended through the work of figures such as [Norman Geisler](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Norman_Geisler), [Robert Barron](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Barron_(bishop)), [Scott Hahn](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scott_Hahn), [Ravi Zacharias](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ravi_Zacharias), [John Lennox](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Lennox), [Lee Strobel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lee_Strobel), [Francis Collins](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francis_Collins), [Alvin Plantinga](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alvin_Plantinga), [Hugh Ross](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hugh_Ross_(astrophysicist)), [James White](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_White_(theologian)), [Gary Habermas](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gary_Habermas), [R. C. Sproul](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/R._C._Sproul) and [William Lane Craig](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Lane_Craig).



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**Jewish Precursors**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Christian_apologetics&action=edit&section=2)]

According to [Edgar J. Goodspeed](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edgar_J._Goodspeed) in the first century CE Jewish apologetic elements could be seen in works such as [The Wisdom of Solomon](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Wisdom_of_Solomon), [Philo](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philo)'s *On the Contemplative Life* and more explicitly in [Josephus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Josephus)' [*Against Apion*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Against_Apion).[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-:0-3)

**Apostolic and Post-Apostolic Period**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Christian_apologetics&action=edit&section=3)]

Christian apologetics first appear in the New Testament (e. g. Paul's preaching on Mars Hill in Acts 17:22-31). During the [subapostolic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apostolic_Fathers" \o "Apostolic Fathers) age Christianity was already competing with Judaism as well as with various other religions and sects in the Greco-Roman world. Christian apologetics can be first seen in the ''Preaching of Peter'' ([Gospel of Peter](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gospel_of_Peter)), but the first explicitly apologetic work comes from [Quadratus of Athens](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quadratus_of_Athens) (c. 125 CE) in which he writes a defense of the faith to emperor [Hadrian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hadrian). Only a fragment, quoted by [Eusebius](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eusebius), has survived to our day:[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-:0-3)

"But the works of our Saviour were always present, for they were genuine:—those that were healed, and those that were raised from the dead, who were seen not only when they were healed and when they were raised, but were also always present; and not merely while the Saviour was on earth, but also after his death, they were alive for quite a while, so that some of them lived even to our day." (*Church History* iv. 3. 2)

One of the first comprehensive attacks on Christianity came from the Greek philosopher [Celsus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Celsus" \o "Celsus), who wrote [*The True Word*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_True_Word) (c.175 CE), a polemic criticizing Christians as being unprofitable members of society.[[4]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-4)[[5]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-5)[[6]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-Olson1999-6) In response, the church father [Origen](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Origen) published his apologetic treatise [*Contra Celsum*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Contra_Celsum), or *Against Celsus*, which systematically addressed Celsus's criticisms and helped bring Christianity a level of academic respectability.[[7]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-McGuckin2004-7)[[6]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-Olson1999-6) In the treatise, Origen writes from the perspective of a [Platonic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Platonism) philosopher, drawing extensively on the teachings of [Plato](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plato).[[8]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-8)[[7]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-McGuckin2004-7)[[6]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-Olson1999-6) *Contra Celsum* is widely regarded by modern scholars as one of the most important works of early Christian apologetics.[[7]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-McGuckin2004-7)[[6]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-Olson1999-6)[[9]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-9)

Other apologists from this period are [Aristides of Athens](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aristides_of_Athens), the author of the [Epistle to Diognetus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Epistle_to_Diognetus), [Aristo of Pella](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aristo_of_Pella), [Tatian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tatian), [Justin Martyr](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Justin_Martyr), [Melito of Sardis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Melito_of_Sardis" \o "Melito of Sardis), [Athenagoras of Athens](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Athenagoras_of_Athens), [Theophilus of Antioch](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theophilus_of_Antioch), [Irenaeus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irenaeus), [Origen](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Origen), [Hippolytus of Rome](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hippolytus_of_Rome), [Tertullian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tertullian), [Minucius Felix](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Minucius_Felix" \o "Minucius Felix), [Cyprian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cyprian), and [Victorinus of Pettau](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Victorinus_of_Pettau), [[10]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-10)

**The Middle Ages and Early Modern Period**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Christian_apologetics&action=edit&section=4)]

[Anselm of Canterbury](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anselm_of_Canterbury) propounded the ontological argument in his *[Proslogion](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Proslogion" \o "Proslogion)*. [Thomas Aquinas](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Aquinas) presented five *ways*, or arguments for God's existence, in the [*Summa Theologica*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Summa_Theologica), while his [*Summa contra Gentiles*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Summa_contra_Gentiles) was a major apologetic work.[[11]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-11)[[12]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-12) Aquinas also made significant criticisms of the ontological argument which resulted in its losing popularity until it was revived by Rene Descartes in his [*Meditations*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meditations). [[13]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-13) [Blaise Pascal](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blaise_Pascal) outlined an approach to apologetics in his [*Pensées*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pens%C3%A9es): "Men despise religion; they hate it and fear it is true. To remedy this, we must begin by showing that religion is not contrary to reason; that it is venerable, to inspire respect for it; then we must make it lovable, to make good men hope it is true; finally, we must prove it is true."[[14]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-14)[[15]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-15)

**Late Modern Period**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Christian_apologetics&action=edit&section=5)]

Christian apologetics continues in modern times in a wide variety of forms. Among the Roman Catholics there are [Bishop Robert Barron](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Barron_(bishop)), [G. K. Chesterton](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/G._K._Chesterton),[[16]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-16) [Ronald Knox](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ronald_Knox), [Arnold Lunn](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arnold_Lunn), [Karl Keating](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karl_Keating), [Michael Voris](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_Voris), [Peter Kreeft](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peter_Kreeft), [Frank Sheed](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frank_Sheed), and [Dr. Scott Hahn](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scott_Hahn). The [Russian Orthodox](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russian_Orthodox_Church) [Seraphim Rose](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seraphim_Rose) is perhaps the best known modern, English speaking [Eastern Orthodox](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eastern_Orthodox_Church) apologist. Among the Evangelicals there is the [Anglican](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anglicanism) [C. S. Lewis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/C._S._Lewis) (who popularized the argument now known as [Lewis's trilemma](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lewis%27s_trilemma)).[[17]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-17) Among Protestant apologists of the 19th century there was [William Paley](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Paley) who popularized the [Watchmaker analogy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Watchmaker_analogy). In the first half of the 20th century many [Christian fundamentalists](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_fundamentalism) became well known apologists. Some of the best known are [R. A. Torrey](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/R._A._Torrey) and [John Gresham Machen](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Gresham_Machen). [Evangelical](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Evangelicalism) Norman Geisler, [Lutheran](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lutheranism) [John Warwick Montgomery](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Warwick_Montgomery) and [Presbyterian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Presbyterianism) [Francis Schaeffer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francis_Schaeffer) were among the most prolific Christian apologists in the latter half of the 20th century and into the 21st, while [Gordon Clark](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gordon_Clark) and [Cornelius Van Til](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cornelius_Van_Til) started a new school of philosophical apologetics called [presuppositionalism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Presuppositional_apologetics" \o "Presuppositional apologetics), which is popular in [Calvinist](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Calvinism) circles.

Others include [Douglas Groothuis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Douglas_Groothuis), [Josh McDowell](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Josh_McDowell), [Hugo Anthony Meynell](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hugo_Anthony_Meynell), [Timothy J. Keller](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timothy_J._Keller), [Francis Collins](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francis_Collins), [Vishal Mangalwadi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vishal_Mangalwadi), [Richard Bauckham](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Bauckham), [Craig Evans](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Craig_A._Evans), [Darrell Bock](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Darrell_Bock), [John F. MacArthur](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_F._MacArthur), [Michael R. Licona](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_R._Licona) and [John Lennox](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Lennox).

Terminology and origin[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Christian_apologetics&action=edit&section=6)]

The original Greek [*apologia*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apologia) (ἀπολογία, from ἀπολογέομαι, *apologeomai*, "speak in return, defend oneself") was a formal verbal defense, either in response to accusation or prosecution in a court of law. The defense of [Socrates](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Socrates) as presented by [Plato](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apology_(Plato)) and [Xenophon](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apology_(Xenophon)) was an *apologia* against charges of "corrupting the young, and … not believing in the gods in whom the city believes, but in other *[daimonia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daemon_(classical_mythology)" \o "Daemon (classical mythology))* that are novel".[[18]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-18)

In later use 'apologia' sometimes took a literary form in early Christian discourse as an example of the integration of educated Christians into the cultural life of the [Roman Empire](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Empire), particularly during the ["little peace" of the 3rd century](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Little_Peace_of_the_Church),[[19]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-19) and of their participation in the Greek intellectual movement broadly known as the [Second Sophistic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_Sophistic).[[20]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-20) The Christian apologists of the early Church did not reject [Greek philosophy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_philosophy), but attempted to show the positive value of Christianity in dynamic relation to the Greek rationalist tradition.[[21]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-21)

In the 2nd century, apologetics was a defense or explanation of Christianity,[[22]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-22) addressed to those standing in opposition and those yet to form an opinion, such as [emperors](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_emperor) and other authority figures, or potential converts.[[23]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-Jacobsen_p._14-23) The earliest [martyr narrative](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Acts_of_the_Martyrs) has the spokesman for the persecuted present a defense in the apologetic mode: Christianity was a rational religion that worshiped only God, and although Christians were law-abiding citizens willing to honor the emperor, their belief in a single divinity prevented them from taking the loyalty oaths that acknowledged the [emperor's divinity](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Imperial_cult_(ancient_Rome)).[[24]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-24)

The apologetic [historiography](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Historiography) in the [*Acts of the Apostles*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Acts_of_the_Apostles) presented Christianity as a religious movement at home within the Roman Empire and no threat to it and was a model for the first major [historian of the Church](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Church_history), Eusebius.[[25]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-25) Apologetics might also be directed to Christians already within the community explain their beliefs and justify positions.[[23]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-Jacobsen_p._14-23) [Origen](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Origen)'s apologetic [*Contra Celsum*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Celsus), for instance, provided a defense against the arguments of a critic dead for decades to provide answers to doubting Christians lacking immediate answers to the questions raised. Apologetic literature was an important medium for the formation of early Christian identity.[[26]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-26)

In addition to Origen and Tertullian, early Christian apologists include [Justin Martyr](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Justin_Martyr), [Clement of Alexandria](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clement_of_Alexandria), and the author of the [Epistle to Diognetus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Epistle_to_Diognetus).[[27]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-27) [Augustine of Hippo](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Augustine_of_Hippo) was a significant apologist of the [Patristic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patristics) era.[[28]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-28) Some scholars regard apologetics as a distinct [literary genre](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Literary_genre) exhibiting commonalities of style and form, content, and strategies of [argumentation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Argumentation). Others viewed it as a form of [discourse](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Discourse) characterized by its [tone](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tone_(literature)) and purpose.[[29]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-Jacobsen_pp._19-29)

**Biblical basis**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Christian_apologetics&action=edit&section=7)]

R. C. Sproul, quoting the [First Epistle of Peter](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/First_Epistle_of_Peter), writes that "The defense of the faith is not a luxury or intellectual vanity. It is a task appointed by God that you should be able to give a reason for the hope that is in you as you bear witness before the world."[[30]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-30) The verse quoted here reads in full: "but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect."[[31]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-31)

Another passage sometimes used as a biblical basis for Christian apologetics is God's entreaty in the [Book of Isaiah](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Book_of_Isaiah): "Come now, let us reason together."[[32]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-32)[[33]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-33) Other scriptural passages which have been taken as a basis for Christian apologetics include [Psalm 19](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Psalm_19), which begins "The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands,"[[34]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-34) and [Romans 1](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Romans_1), which reads "For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse."[[35]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-35)[[36]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-36)

Varieties[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Christian_apologetics&action=edit&section=8)]

There are a variety of Christian apologetic styles and schools of thought. The major types of Christian apologetics include historical and legal evidentialist apologetics, presuppositional apologetics, philosophical apologetics, prophetic apologetics, doctrinal apologetics, biblical apologetics, moral apologetics, and scientific apologetics.

**Biblical apologetics**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Christian_apologetics&action=edit&section=9)]

Biblical apologetics include issues concerned with the authorship and date of biblical books, [biblical canon](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Biblical_canon), and [biblical inerrancy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Biblical_inerrancy). Christian apologists defend and comment on various books of the Bible. Some scholars who have engaged in the defense of biblical inerrancy include [Robert Dick Wilson](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Dick_Wilson), [Gleason Archer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gleason_Archer), Norman Geisler and [R. C. Sproul](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/R._C._Sproul). There are several resources that Christians offer defending inerrancy in regard to specific verses.[[*citation needed*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Citation_needed)] Authors defending the reliability of the Gospels include [Craig Blomberg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Craig_Blomberg) in *The Historical Reliability of the Gospels*,[[37]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-37) Mark D. Roberts in *Can We Trust the Gospels?*[[38]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-38) [Richard Bauckham](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Bauckham), [Craig Evans](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Craig_A._Evans) and [Darrell Bock](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Darrell_Bock).

Other old Earth creationists, such as astrophysicist [Hugh Ross](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hugh_Ross_(creationist)), see each of the six days of creation as being a long, but finite period of time, based on the multiple meanings of the Hebrew word *[yom](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yom" \o "Yom)* (day light hours/24 hours/age of time) and other Biblical creation passages.[[39]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-39)[[40]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-40)

**Experiential apologetics**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Christian_apologetics&action=edit&section=10)]

Experiential apologetics is a reference to an appeal "primarily, if not exclusively, to experience as evidence for Christian faith."[[41]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-41) Also, "they spurn rational arguments or factual evidence in favor of what they believe to be a self-verifying experience." This view stresses experience that other apologists have not made as explicit, and in the end, the concept that the Holy Spirit convinces the heart of truth becomes the central theme of the apologetic argument.[[42]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-42)

**Historical and legal evidentialism**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Christian_apologetics&action=edit&section=11)]

A variety of arguments has been forwarded by legal scholars such as [Simon Greenleaf](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Simon_Greenleaf) and [John Warwick Montgomery](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Warwick_Montgomery), by expert forensic investigators such as cold case homicide detective [J. Warner Wallace](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/J._Warner_Wallace), and academic historical scholars, such as [Edwin M. Yamauchi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edwin_M._Yamauchi). These arguments present a case for the historicity of the [resurrection of Christ](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Resurrection_of_Christ) per current legal standards of evidence or undermining the pagan myth hypothesis for the origin of Christianity.[[43]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-43)[[44]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-44)[[45]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-45)[[46]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-46)[[47]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-47)[[48]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-48)

Evidence for the historicity of the A. N. Sherwin-White states:

For Acts, the confirmation of historicity is overwhelming. Acts is, in simple terms and judged externally, no less of a propaganda narrative than the Gospels, liable to similar distortions. But any attempt to reject its basic historicity, even in matters of detail, must now appear absurd. Roman historians have long taken it for granted.... The agnostic type of form-criticism would be much more credible if the compilation of the Gospels were much later in time.... Herodotus enables us to test the tempo of myth-making, [showing that] even two generations are too short a span to allow the mythical tendency to prevail over the hard historic core.[[49]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-49)

**Moral apologetics**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Christian_apologetics&action=edit&section=12)]

*See also:*[*Divine command*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Divine_command)*and*[*Biblical law in Christianity*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Biblical_law_in_Christianity)

Moral apologetics states that real moral obligation is a fact. Catholic apologist [Peter Kreeft](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peter_Kreeft) said, "We are really, truly, objectively obligated to do good and avoid evil."[[50]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-50) In moral apologetics, the arguments for man's sinfulness and man's need for redemption are stressed. Examples of this type of apologetic would be [Jonathan Edwards](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jonathan_Edwards_(theologian))'s sermon "[Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sinners_in_the_Hands_of_an_Angry_God)."[[51]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-51) The [Four Spiritual Laws](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Four_Spiritual_Laws) religious tract (Campus Crusade for Christ) would be another example.[[52]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-52)

**Defense of miracles**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Christian_apologetics&action=edit&section=13)]

*See also:*[*Miracles of Jesus*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miracles_of_Jesus)

C. S. Lewis,[[53]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-53) Norman Geisler,[[54]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-54) William Lane Craig and Christians who engage in jurisprudence Christian apologetics have argued that [miracles](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miracle) are reasonable and plausible wherever an all-powerful Creator is postulated.[[55]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-55)[[56]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-56)[[57]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-57)

**Philosophical apologetics**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Christian_apologetics&action=edit&section=14)]

Philosophical apologetics concerns itself primarily with [arguments for the existence of God](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arguments_for_the_existence_of_God), although they do not exclusively focus on this area. They do not argue for the veracity of Christianity over other religions but merely for the existence of a [Creator](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Creator_god) [deity](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deity). Omnipotence and omniscience are implied in these arguments to greater or lesser degrees: some argue for an interventionist god, some are equally relevant to a [Deist](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deism) conception of God.

They do not support [hard polytheism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hard_polytheism), but could be used to describe the first god who created many other gods; however, the arguments are only relevant when applied to the first god (the [First Cause](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Primum_movens), [Pure Act](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Actus_purus) and [Unmoved Mover](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unmoved_Mover); it is a contradiction [*a priori*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A_priori_and_a_posteriori) to suppose a plurality of "Pure Acts" or "First Causes" or "Unmoved Movers").

These arguments can be grouped into several categories:

1. [Cosmological argument](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cosmological_argument) – Argues that the existence of the universe demonstrates that God exists. Various primary arguments from cosmology and the nature of causation are often offered to support the cosmological argument.[[58]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-58)[[59]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-59)[[60]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-60)
2. [Teleological argument](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Teleological_argument) – Argues that there is a purposeful design in the world around us, and a design requires a designer. [Cicero](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cicero), [William Paley](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Paley), and [Michael Behe](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_Behe) use this argument as well as others.[[61]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-61)
3. [Ontological argument](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ontological_argument) – Argues that the very concept of God demands that there is an actual existent God.
4. [Moral Argument](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Argument_from_morality) – Argues that there are objectively valid moral values, and therefore, there must be an absolute from which they are derived.[[62]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-62)
5. [Transcendental Argument](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transcendental_argument_for_the_existence_of_God) – Argues that all our abilities to think and reason require the existence of God.
6. [Presuppositional Arguments](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Presuppositional_apologetics) – Argues that the basic beliefs of theists and nontheists require God as a necessary precondition.

Other philosophical arguments include:

* [Alvin Plantinga](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alvin_Plantinga)'s argument that belief in God is properly basic, [reformed epistemology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reformed_epistemology).[[63]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-63)
* [Pascal's wager](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pascal%27s_wager),[[64]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-64) is an argument that posits that humans all bet with their lives either that [God exists](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Existence_of_God) or that he does not. Pascal argues that a rational person should live as though God exists.[[65]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-65)[[66]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-hammond-66)

In addition to arguments for the existence of God, Christian apologists have also attempted to respond successfully to arguments against the existence of God. Two very popular arguments against the existence of God are the hiddenness argument and the argument from evil. The hiddenness argument tries to show that a perfectly loving God's existence is incompatible with the existence of nonresistant nonbelievers. The argument from evil tries to show that the existence of evil renders God's existence unlikely or impossible.

**Presuppositional apologetics**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Christian_apologetics&action=edit&section=15)]

*Main article:*[*Presuppositional apologetics*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Presuppositional_apologetics)

Presuppositional apologetics is a [Reformed](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Calvinism) [Protestant](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Protestantism) methodology which claims that [presuppositions](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Presupposition_(philosophy)) are essential to any philosophical position and that there are no "neutral" assumptions from which a Christian can reason in common with a non-Christian.[[67]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-Presup-67) There are two main schools of presuppositional apologetics, that of [Cornelius Van Til](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cornelius_Van_Til) (and his students [Greg Bahnsen](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greg_Bahnsen) and [John Frame](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Frame_(philosopher))) and that of [Gordon Haddon Clark](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gordon_Haddon_Clark).

Van Til drew upon but did not always agree with, the work of Dutch [Calvinist](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Calvinism) philosophers and theologians such as [D. H. Th. Vollenhoven](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/D._H._Th._Vollenhoven), [Herman Dooyeweerd](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Herman_Dooyeweerd), [Hendrik G. Stoker](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hendrik_G._Stoker), [Herman Bavinck](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Herman_Bavinck), and [Abraham Kuyper](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abraham_Kuyper). Bahnsen describes Van Til's approach to Christian apologetics as pointing out the difference in ultimate principles between Christians and non-Christians and then showing that the non-Christian principles reduce to absurdity.[[68]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-68) In practice, this school utilizes what has come to be known as the [transcendental argument for the existence of God](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transcendental_argument_for_the_existence_of_God).

Clark held that the Scriptures constituted the [axioms](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Axiom) of Christian thought, which could not be questioned, though their consistency could be discussed.[[67]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-Presup-67) A consequence of this position is that God's existence can never be demonstrated, either by empirical means or by philosophical argument. In *The Justification of Knowledge*, the Calvinist theologian [Robert L. Reymond](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_L._Reymond) argues that believers should not even attempt such proofs.

**Prophetic fulfillment**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Christian_apologetics&action=edit&section=16)]

*See also: [Postdiction](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Postdiction" \o "Postdiction)*

In his book *Science Speaks*, [Peter Stoner](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peter_Stoner) argues that only God knows the future and that Biblical prophecies of a compelling nature have been fulfilled.[[69]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-69) Apologist [Josh McDowell](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Josh_McDowell) documents the Old Testament prophecies fulfilled by Christ, relating to his ancestral line, birthplace, virgin birth, miracles, death, and resurrection.[[70]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-70) Apologist [Blaise Pascal](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blaise_Pascal) believed that the prophecies are the strongest evidence for Christianity. He notes that Jesus not only foretold, but was foretold, unlike in other religions, and that these prophecies came from a succession of people over a span of four thousand years.[[71]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-71)

**Origins apologetics**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Christian_apologetics&action=edit&section=17)]

Many Christians contend that science and the Bible do not contradict each other and that scientific fact supports Christian apologetics.[[72]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-72)[[73]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-73) The [*Catechism of the Catholic Church*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catechism_of_the_Catholic_Church) states that "The question about the origins of the world and of man has been the object of many scientific studies which have splendidly enriched our knowledge... These discoveries invite us to even greater admiration for the greatness of the Creator."[[74]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-CCC287-74) The theologian and mathematician [Marin Mersenne](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marin_Mersenne) used celestial mechanics as evidence in his apologetic work,[[75]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-75) while [Matteo Ricci](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Matteo_Ricci) engaged in scientific apologetics in China.[[76]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-76) In modern times, the theory of the [Big Bang](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Big_Bang) has been used in support of Christian apologetics.[[77]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-77)[[78]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-78)

Several Christian apologists have sought to reconcile Christianity and science concerning the question of origins. [Theistic Evolution](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theistic_Evolution) claims that classical religious teachings about God are compatible with the modern scientific understanding about biological evolution and that the Creator God uses the process of evolution. [Denis Lamoureux](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Denis_Lamoureux), in *Evolutionary Creation: A Christian Approach to Evolution* states that "This view of origins fully embraces both the religious beliefs of biblical Christianity and the scientific theories of cosmological, geological, and biological evolution. It contends that the Creator established and maintains the laws of nature, including the mechanisms of a [teleological evolution](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Teleology)."[[79]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-79)

The most radical[[*citation needed*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Citation_needed)] example of a Christian-evolutionary synthesis is the work of [Pierre Teilhard de Chardin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pierre_Teilhard_de_Chardin), which was intended as apologetics to the world of science,[[80]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-80) but which was later condemned by the Catholic Church.

**Creationist apologetics**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Christian_apologetics&action=edit&section=18)]

[](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:AIG_museum.jpg)

The [Creation Museum](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Creation_Museum) is a young Earth creationism museum run by the creation apologetics organization [Answers in Genesis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Answers_in_Genesis) (AiG) in [Petersburg, Kentucky](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Petersburg,_Boone_County,_Kentucky).

Creationist apologetics aims to defend views of origins such as young Earth creationism and old Earth creationism that run counter to mainstream science. [Young Earth creationists](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Young_Earth_creationism) believe the Bible teaches that the Earth is approximately 6,000 years old, and reject the scientific consensus for the [age of the Earth](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Age_of_the_Earth). They apply a [literal interpretation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Biblical_literalism) to the primordial history in Genesis 1–11 – such as the long life spans of people such as [Methuselah](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Methuselah),[[81]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-81)[[82]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-82) the [Flood](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Flood_(Biblical)),[[83]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-83)[[84]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-84) and the [Tower of Babel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tower_of_Babel).[[85]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-85)[[86]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-86)[[87]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-87) [Old Earth creationists](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Old_Earth_creationists) believe it is possible to harmonize the Bible's six-day account of creation with the scientific evidence that the universe is 13.8 billion-years-old and Earth is 4.54 billion-years-old.

Major colleges and universities offering Christian apologetics programs[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Christian_apologetics&action=edit&section=19)]

| **School** | **Location** | **Program** | **Comments** | **Degrees awarded** | **Ref.** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| [Biola University](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Biola_University) | Southern California, US | Christian Apologetics |  | Certificate, M.A. | [[88]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-88) |
| [Central India Theological Seminary](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_India_Theological_Seminary) | Itarsi, India | Christian Apologetics |  | M.Th., Ph.D. | [[89]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-89)  [[90]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-90) |
| [Clarks Summit University](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clarks_Summit_University) | South Abington Township, PA, US | Biblical Apologetics |  | M.A. | [[91]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-91) |
| [Denver Seminary](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Denver_Seminary) | Colorado, US | Apologetics and Ethics |  | M.A., M.Div. with Emphasis | [[92]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-92)[[93]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-93) |
| [Hong Kong Centre for Christian Apologetics](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hong_Kong_Centre_for_Christian_Apologetics) | Hong Kong | Christian Apologetics |  | Certificate in Christian Apologetics | [[94]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-94) |
| [Houston Baptist University](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Houston_Baptist_University) | Houston, TX, US | Christian Apologetics |  | M.A.A. | [[95]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-95) |
| [New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Orleans_Baptist_Theological_Seminary) | New Orleans, Louisiana | Christian Apologetics |  | M.A., M.Div., D.Min., Ph.D. | [[96]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-96) |
| [Oklahoma Wesleyan University](http://www.okwu.edu/) | Bartlesville, Oklahoma | Christian Apologetics |  | M.A. |  |
| [Westminster Theological Seminary](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Westminster_Theological_Seminary) | Philadelphia, US | Apologetics |  | Doctoral, Masters, Certificate Programs | [[97]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-97) |
| [South African Theological Seminary](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_African_Theological_Seminary) | Johannesburg, South Africa | Apologetics |  | MTh | [[98]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-98) |
| [Southern Baptist Theological Seminary](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Southern_Baptist_Theological_Seminary) | Louisville, KY | Apologetics/Apologetics & Worldviews |  | M.A., Ph.D. | [[99]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-99) |
| [Southern Evangelical Seminary](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Southern_Evangelical_Seminary) | Charlotte, North Carolina | Apologetics/Scientific Apologetics |  | Certificate, MA, MDiv, DMin | [[100]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-100) |
| [Gimlekollen NLA College](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gimlekollen_NLA_College) | Kristiansand, Norway | Communication, worldview and Christian apologetics |  | Certificate, Bachelor | [[101]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_apologetics#cite_note-101) |

**The need for creation apologetics**

***by***[***Cody Guitard***](https://creation.com/cody-guitard)

iStockphoto

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In my work with an apologetics ministry, I often interact with pastors in arranging talks and public discussions featuring various apologists and scholars. Though they are very keen when it comes to most subjects involving defence of the faith, there is often a distinct reluctance to having *creationist* ministry conferences and presentations. Several have told me they do not see the creation-evolution issue as relevant. Many such leaders overlook the fact that denial of biblical creation is one of the greatest obstacles to Christian faith facing the church today.

**New study highlights the problem**

Research published by the Barna Group in January 2018 showed that atheism among Generation Z—those born between 1999 and 2015—is double that of the general population.1 The researchers discovered that in addition to many teens embracing relativism and/or agnosticism about what is true and, particularly, what is true about God (His existence, how to acquire eternal life, etc.), nearly half of teens—and ‘millennials’ (a.k.a. Generation Y, those born between 1980 and 1999)—said they needed *factual evidence* to support their beliefs. When asked what they considered to be the greatest barriers to accepting the Christian faith, Barna found that two of the most common answers given by non-Christian young people, especially millennials, is (1) that science refutes too much of the Bible and (2) refusal to believe in ‘fairy tales’.

Importantly, though, most (whether indoctrinators or the indoctrinated) fail to make the distinction between **facts** and their **interpretation**.

So, many non-Christian young people think that the scientific evidence does not support belief in the Bible. One reason for this is the constant stream of pro-evolution propaganda. Importantly, though, most (whether indoctrinators or the indoctrinated) fail to make the distinction between *facts*and their *interpretation*.

**Facts vs interpretation**

The late famous palaeontologist, evolutionary biologist, and historian of science Stephen Jay Gould correctly noted: “Facts do not ‘speak for themselves’; they are read in the light of theory. … [Science is] not a mechanized, robotlike accumulation of objective information, leading by laws of logic to inescapable interpretation.”2 This is not to support the postmodern idea that truth is relative and every interpretation is equally valid. There *is* objective truth and therefore an objectively correct interpretation of each and every fact. But the question is, particularly when it comes to reconstructing the history of life on Earth, what is that correct interpretation?

An evolutionist looking at the fossil record (i.e., the observable *fact*), ‘sees’ (actually, *interprets*) it as a record of the evolutionary history of life from a universal common ancestor over billions of years. However, a creationist interprets the same facts as largely representing a vast sequence of rapid burial by a complex, cataclysmic global Flood. One can evaluate the validity of either creation or evolution by considering whether there are any observable facts that cannot be [consistently interpreted](https://creation.com/how-to-think) within the worldview in question. If there were, for example, [fossils](https://creation.com/polystrate-fossils-evidence-for-a-young-earth) crossing through multiple layers of rock supposed to have formed over millions of years, or [fossil organisms](https://creation.com/so-called-age-of-dinosaurs) found out of sequence of their supposed evolutionary history, or soft tissue found in the remains of organisms which supposedly died out ‘millions of years ago’,3 then the observable fossil record would be inconsistent with the evolutionary worldview (though such observations *would* be consistent with the creationist worldview). When confronted with such inconsistencies, each side constructs auxiliary hypotheses to explain the discrepancies. For example, the evolutionist might speculate that there must be some way that fragile organic molecules can last for millions of years longer than laboratory testing indicates.

We can evaluate these competing interpretive frameworks by examining the frequency and credibility of such ad hoc storytelling within each.

However, while resistance to having creation ministry persists within a church, how will young people even get to know about these issues? How will they discover that evolutionists have claimed an *illegitimate* monopoly on science by teaching that the facts unequivocally prove evolution is true, when the reality is that the evolutionary worldview is only *one*possible interpretation of the known facts; and a strained one at that. How, too, will they discover that there are many with high scientific qualifications who used to accept the evolutionary framework, but are now convinced that our current scientific knowledge is more consistently interpreted within the framework of the straightforward teaching of Genesis?

**The importance of Genesis**

But why is denial of biblical creation so detrimental to the Christian faith? For one thing, Genesis is [logically foundational](https://creation.com/genesis-the-seedbed-of-all-christian-doctrine) to every major Christian doctrine, including the Gospel message itself.

Consider the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the foundation of our faith and the historical centre of the Gospel of salvation and eternal life. Jesus and the Apostles took the Genesis creation account as historical fact. But if it is actually poetic allegory or religious myth, then the person and work of Christ is undermined—His work was to reverse the effects of Adam and Eve’s bringing sin and death into the world at the Fall.

Paul explains that “sin came into the world through one man [Adam], and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned” ([Romans 5:12](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Rom%205.12)). In consequence, Jesus paid the penalty for sin on the cross and defeated death three days later in His resurrection, beginning the reversal of what Adam had done: “For as by the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man’s obedience the many will be made righteous” ([Romans 5:19](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Rom%205.19); cf. v. [21](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Romans%205.21)). “For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive” ([1 Corinthians 15:21–22](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Cor%2015.21%E2%80%9322)). This is why the Bible speaks of “the first man Adam” and Jesus is called “the last Adam” ([1 Corinthians 15:45](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Cor%2015.45); cf. [Romans 5:14](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Rom%205.14)). The historical work of the second Adam is dependent on the reality of the historical work of the first. Both Adams are essential for the Gospel message—even informed non-Christians recognize this.

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Furthermore, consider the entire ‘big picture’ of the Gospel—a good world, ruined by sin, to be restored for all eternity through Jesus’ act on the Cross. It’s about more than one’s individual salvation. If the fossils do *not* represent the mass entombment of the pre-Flood world, but rather, as we are told, a tape recording of long ages showing death, disease, suffering and even cancer on a humongous scale before any people were present to rebel against God, what then? It would not only make God the author of death and suffering and having Him call it part of His “very good” creation ([Genesis 1:31](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Gen%201.31)), but it would also mean that instead of a once-fallen, decaying world in bondage, groaning for its liberation and restoration ([Romans 8:18-23](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Rom%208.18-23)), we have, we are told, a world which is continually evolving ever upwards and onwards. No wonder atheists like Richard Dawkins call those Christians who try to reconcile this to the Bible “barking mad”.4

It is also no wonder that ‘creation evangelism’ has such a powerful track record. The history recorded in Genesis concerning Creation, the Fall, the Flood, and even the dispersion from Babel, is [key to answering the major science-related stumbling blocks](https://creation.com/creation-why-it-matters) to young and old placing their faith in Christ.

**Creation apologetics needed**

The results from the Barna research study are reminiscent of the campus interviews conducted by CMI in the American ‘Bible Belt’ (south-eastern and south-central United States) for their 2015 documentary [*Fallout!*](https://creation.com/fallout) The results were not surprising:

Our interviews show unequivocally that the majority of young people who were not exposed to creation teaching in their youth now embrace evolution and no longer attend church. Yet, every student we spoke to who *was* equipped with answers as a young person *still retains their Christian convictions*, in spite of the evolutionary teaching they received in higher education. Better still, every student we spoke to who affirmed biblical creation still attends church regularly.

While only God can save our young people, we can remove intellectual barriers and help them to have a clear understanding of the faith by teaching them in the home and the church the biblical Gospel of Jesus Christ—and providing sound teaching as to [*why* we believe the Gospel message is *true*](https://creation.com/us-christianity-not-dying). Scripture tells us to be ready with answers to questions and objections about Christianity ([1 Peter 3:15](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Pet%203.15)), dismantling intellectual barriers to saving faith in Jesus Christ ([2 Corinthians 10:3–5](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%20Cor%2010.3%E2%80%935)). And there *are* answers—more today than ever! Believers need to equip the younger generations with these answers so that when they go out into the world—whether school, the work place, or wherever—they may say along with the apostle Paul: “I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes” ([Romans 1:16](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Rom%201.16)).