

Definition of Apologetics

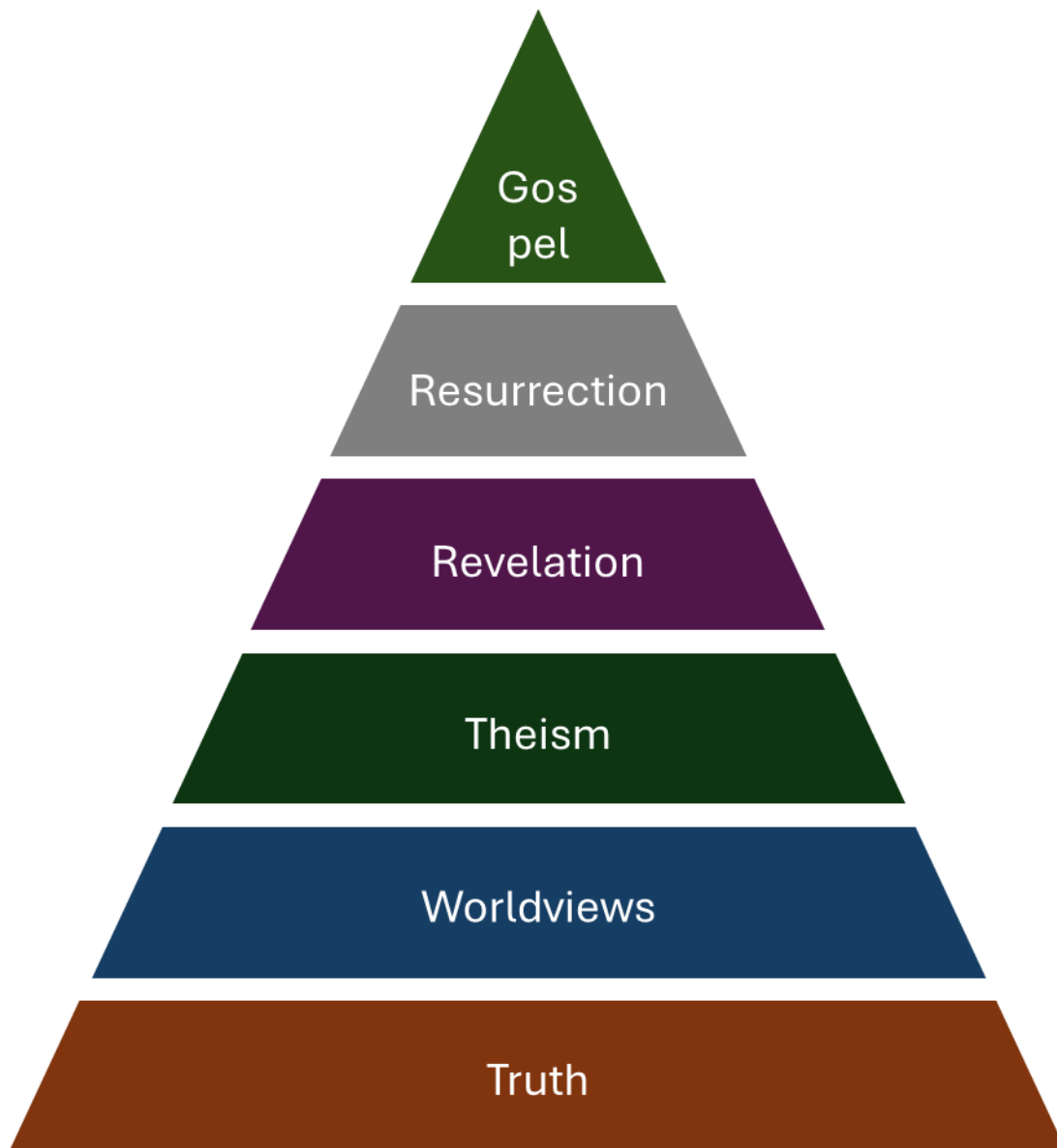
Apologetics is the discipline of offering a reasoned defense or justification for a belief system—most commonly, the Christian faith.

It involves:

- **Systematic argumentation:** Using logic, evidence, and philosophical reasoning to support theological claims.
- **Clarification and vindication:** Responding to objections, misconceptions, or critiques with clarity and grace.
- **Invitation to reflection:** Not merely winning debates, but inviting others into deeper understanding and spiritual inquiry.
- The term comes from the Greek apologia, meaning “a speech in defense.” It appears in Scripture (e.g., 1 Peter 3:15):
 - “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...”
- Other passages and their usages:

Reference	Theme	Use in Apologetics
Jude 3	Contending for the faith	Urges believers to defend the original apostolic teaching against distortion.
Acts 17:2–4, 17	Reasoning in public spaces	Paul engages both Jews and Gentiles with reasoned arguments from Scripture.
2 Corinthians 10:5	Intellectual warfare	Calls believers to demolish false arguments and take thoughts captive to Christ.
Colossians 4:5–6	Gracious speech	Encourages wise, seasoned responses to outsiders—apologetics with gentleness.
Proverbs 15:28	Thoughtful answers	Highlights the righteous pondering before answering—key to respectful dialogue.
Isaiah 1:18	Invitation to reason	God invites His people to reason together—affirming that faith is not blind.
Titus 1:9	Refuting opposition	Leaders must be able to encourage with sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.
2 Timothy 2:24–26	Teaching with kindness	Apologetics must be patient, kind, and aimed at leading others to truth.
Philippians 1:7, 16	Defense of the gospel	Paul speaks of being “appointed for the defense of the gospel”—a direct apologetic role.
Romans 1:20	Natural revelation	Creation itself offers evidence of God’s nature—an apologetic rooted in observation.

The Pyramid of Apologetics



- “What is Truth?” – Pontius Pilate
 - “A true claim states things the way they are and a false claim states things differently from the way they are.” - Plato in *The Sophist*
 - **Correspondence Theory:** A claim or proposition is true if it corresponds with a fact
 - Opinions and beliefs are subjective.
 - Truth is not.
 - Can truth be subjective or relative in religion?
 - All major world religions make truth claims that are absolute – but they contradict each other.
 - Christianity claims that Jesus is the Messiah and that He gave His life as a Sacrifice for Sin.
 - Other religions deny this claim.
 - Which one is correct?
 - To say all are true may sound gracious – but such a claim is logically absurd
 - It would actually contradict the law of non-contradiction which states that something cannot be both true and non-true at the same time within the same context.
 - Isn't it intolerant to say that truth is absolute?
 - No. Truth cannot be bigoted.
 - How we handled it can be.
 - So, “we are to teach the truth in love.” (Ephesians 4.15)

“Religion is fundamentally about truth: trying to figure out what is real and how best to represent it.” - Humble Apologetics: Defending the Faith Today by John Stackhouse