



## Apologetics (part 1 of 3)

Francis Schaeffer

*This is an outline for an audio resource. Part 2 is here and Part 3 is here.*

### 1. What is apologetics in our own generation? (0:00-20:58)

I'm not quite sure what the title of this talk is. There would be two possibilities. Christian apologetics for the second half of the twentieth century or the nature of the relationship and contrast to the thought of the twentieth century and the historic Christian faith.

Apologetics - two ways of bringing together historic Christianity and contemporary thought.

1. Defence – dialogue and answers.
2. Positive - how to communicate with others.

### What is communication?

'Communication is the consideration of how to say that which is in my mind in such a way, through my lips or through the pen into the ears of the other person in such a fashion that when it reaches their thinking apparatus it will say substantially that which I meant it to say, the idea that I had in my own mind.'

*Citadels* - There has been the danger of the citadel mentality. We can say, 'Ah hah, you can't reach me and we go out to lunch.'

Not merely *Academic* - Also if it is to be real Christianity it is never merely scholastic or academic.

*Living with it* - This presentation must be more than just giving a nicely balanced system. We must be able to live with it in the day in which we

live.

Christianity does not separate itself from knowledge. As a matter of fact historic Christianity in contrast to modern theology must bear the weight of believing and teaching that all truth is one. Occasionally people will say, 'Well, is it spiritual to talk about these things? Are you really considering the work of the Holy Spirit when you deal with knowledge with facts?' But I would say 'Yes, the Bible makes it very very plain that indeed while we who are Christians must count upon the work of the Holy Spirit at the same time we must never separate ourselves from knowledge.'

This is particularly true when you struggle honestly with the questions of, 'Is Christianity true?' and 'Should I become a Christian?'

### John 20:30-31

*'Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.'*

### There must be an adequate basis of knowledge

In the Bible you are not invited to 'accept Christ as saviour' until you are convinced with that which you feel is good and sufficient reason. In the 'new theology' there is a different mentality.

If you take the new meanings of the words 'faith' and 'religion' then you are challenged by the Bible. If you define the word 'religion' and you define the word 'faith' in the twentieth meaning of these words then one must say that the New Testament claims not to be a religious book.

There must be a ground of adequate knowledge before Christian commitment. In other words Christian faith is not a jump in the dark.

There are two kinds of apologetics.

1. Apologetics which has not thought a great deal about presuppositions
2. Apologetics which would talk about presuppositional apologetics

## The Line

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Europe - 1890

USA - 1930

## The world before the line

§ Before that time there was very little discussion of presuppositions.

§ Christians should have recognised that what they were saying rested on particular presuppositions.

§ People operated in a more or less unified and complete worldview.

§ Before this line the world around the Christian operated on certain ideas, even if it had no philosophic basis for them.

Accepted absolutes in the area of:

1. Knowledge
2. Morals.

'Be a good girl' made sense before the line.

In the area of being, people before the line would say this is true so this is not.

In general people thought in terms of anti-thesis.

**More and more these concepts were lost.**

**We are not living before that line now. We now need to talk about base, to talk about the presuppositions.**

Many people were confused by this change.

A lot of young people were swept away.

Because the Church had not been preparing people to think into this situation a lot of people were confused where they didn't need to be confused. If we are going to be able to communicate, then we must have an understanding of the culture and situation into which we would like to speak.

## Cultural History

Considering the unified point of view. Christians have been slow at understanding the relationships and associations in the thought forms of the other person. There is a cultural situation that surrounds us. And the Bible speaks of a spirit of the world. This spirit of the world can

take different forms in different periods. We need to be better equipped so that we are not caught up in the world spirit.

This is a resource from the L'Abri Fellowship