How to Engage a Hostile Culture with the Gospel—

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August 11 & 12, 2018

1 Peter 3:13-17,

*15. Who is going to harm you if you are eager to do good? [14]But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. "Do not fear what they fear ; do not be frightened." [15]**But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,[16]keeping a clear conscience,** so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander. [17]It is better, if it is God's will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.*

NIV….But in your hearts, set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.

NASB….But sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and respect

ESV …..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 d o it with gentleness and respect,

GAP……But in your heart, set apart Christ the Lord as holy, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account of the reason for the hope that is in you, yet do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience.

I.Peter's Two Commands

1. In your heart set apart Christ the Lord as Holy

2. Always be ready to make a defense for the hope that is in you

1. It starts in the Heart

2. Christ is to be:

Set Apart/Holy

3. Christ is: Lord

4. We always need to be Ready

5. Ready to Give a Reason or Defense

6. Christ/the gospel is our Hope

7. We need to do this with Gentleness and Respect

Why do this?

1. The Bible Commands it

3 And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our
message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ,
for which I am in chains. ***4*** *Pray that I may proclaim it*
clearly, as I should. ***5*** *Be wise in the way you act toward*
outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. ***6*** *Let*
your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with
salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.

Colossians 4:3-6

9 He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.

Titus 1:9

Dear friends, although I was very eager to write to you about the salvation we share, I felt compelled to write and urge you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to God's holy people.

Jude 3

Why do this?

2. The Bible speaks of Natural Revelation

- *Ps. 8:1 LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory in the heavens.*

- *Ps. 14:1 The fool says in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt, their deeds are vile; there is no one who does good. **2** The LORD looks down from heaven on all mankind to see if there are any who understand, any who seek God. **3** All have turned away, all have become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one.*

- *Ps. 19:1 The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. **2** Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they reveal knowledge. **3** They have no speech, they use no words; no sound is heard from them. **4** Yet their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world.*

14 Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law. 15 They show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts sometimes accusing them and at other times even defending them.

Romans 2:14-15

Why do this?

3. The Bible speaks of Historical evidence

3 For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance : that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, 5 and that he appeared to Cephas, and then to the Twelve. 6 After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. 7 Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, 8 and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born.

1 Cor 15: 3-8

Why do this?

4. The Early church defended the faith

Acts 2:32 God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it.

***Acts 5: 29** Peter and the other apostles replied: "We must obey God rather than human beings! **30** The God of our ancestors raised Jesus from the dead—whom you killed by hanging him on a cross. **31** God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Savior that he might bring Israel to repentance and forgive their sins.**32** We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him."*

Peter (These are long apologetics—I just gave a few verses)

Acts 9:22 *Yet Saul grew more and more powerful and baffled the Jews living in Damascus by proving that Jesus is the Messiah.*

Acts 17:2 As was his custom, Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, ***3*** *explaining and proving that the Messiah had to suffer and rise from the dead. "This Jesus I am proclaiming to you is the Messiah," he said.*

Acts 18:4 Every Sabbath he reasoned in the synagogue, trying to persuade Jews and Greeks. ***5*** *When Silas and Timothy came from Macedonia, Paul devoted himself exclusively to preaching, testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Messiah.*

Paul

Acts 18:24 Meanwhile a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was a learned man, with a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures. **25** *He had been instructed in the way of the Lord, and he spoke with great fervor and taught about Jesus accurately, though he knew only the baptism of John.*

Apollos

John 20:30 *Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book.* ***31*** *But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.*

Luke 1:1 *Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us,* ***2*** *just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word.* ***3*** *With this in mind, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, I too decided to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus,* ***4*** *so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught.*

John, Jude and Luke

What does a Biblical Apologetic Do?

1. **Persuade people to Christ—with the grace of Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit.**
2. **Confirms the faith of believers.**
3. **Takes a stand for the truth of Christ, though all disbelieve.**
4. **Glorifies and honors God!**

How do we do this?

One great technique is **Asking Questions:**

- Answering a question with a question can get to the heart of the matter
- Asking questions helps people to question their presuppositions and their world view
- Asking questions can help people see flaws in their cultural assumptions
- Asking questions can help people see what they couldn't see.
- Asking questions helps us avoid traps
- Jesus did it ! We can, too.