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ESSENTIAL ARGUMENTS FOR EFFECTIVE CHRISTIAN APOLOGETICS

Christians today face a culture that is increasingly hostile not only to the Gospel but also to the very philosophical and epistemological foundations for rational thought.

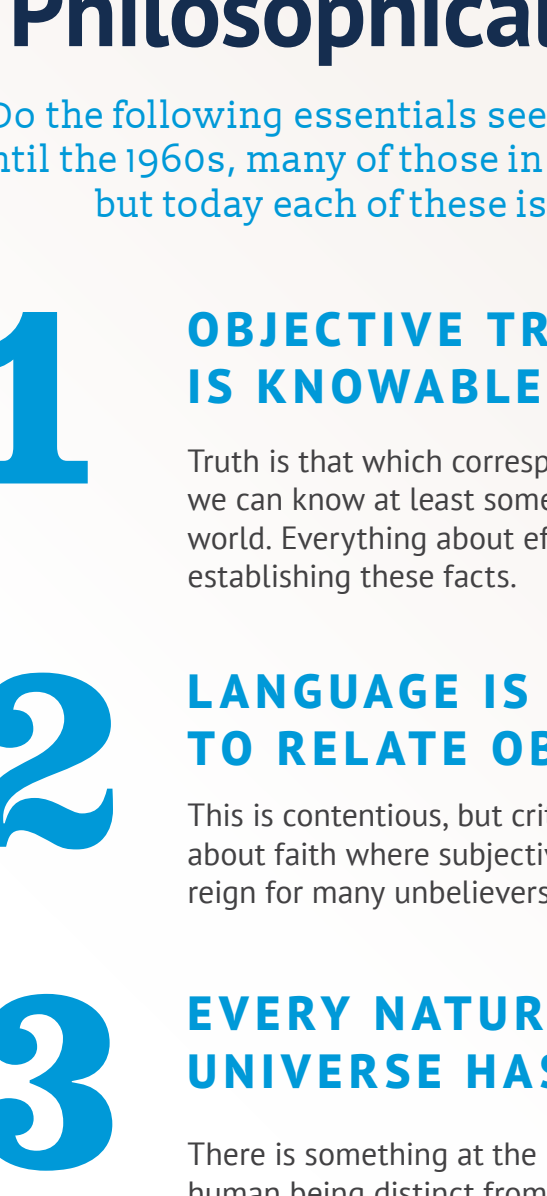
To effectively proclaim and defend the Gospel in personal or full-time ministry in the days ahead, every Christian witness will need some knowledge and experience in apologetics.

In this resource, we have distilled 9 things you should know in order to engage our post-Christian culture, whether that be neighbors, family, friends, or co-workers, with God's truth.

Read them. Explore some of the materials we reference. And let us also encourage you to pray. What might God be leading you to do next in order to be better equipped for ministry?



Proclaim. Engage. Defend.



Philosophical Foundations

Do the following essentials seem like a strange place to begin? Until the 1960s, many of those in ministry would have thought so, but today each of these is requisite for apologetics.

#1

OBJECTIVE TRUTH EXISTS AND IS KNOWABLE.

Truth is that which corresponds to reality. It is undeniable that we can know at least some objective truths about the real world. Everything about effective apologetics depends on establishing these facts.

#2

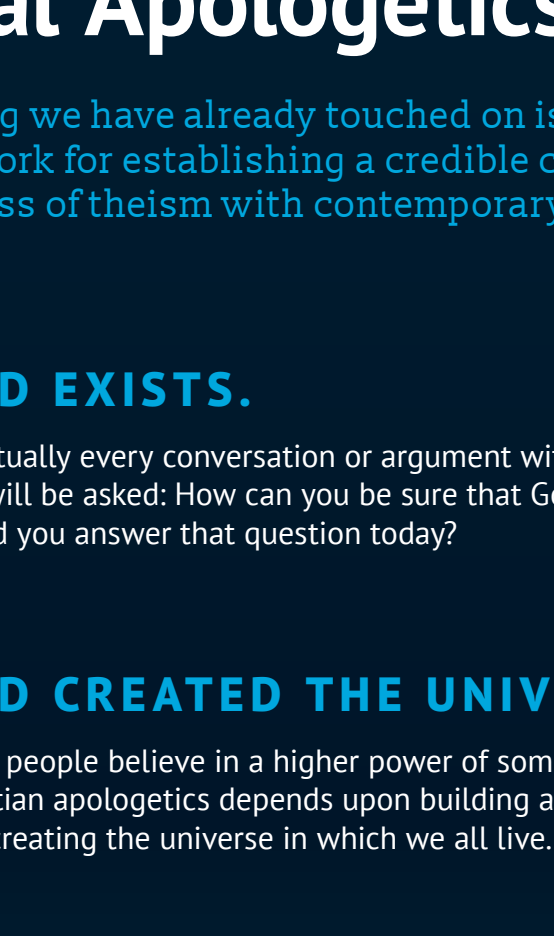
LANGUAGE IS A SUFFICIENT MEDIUM TO RELATE OBJECTIVE TRUTH.

This is contentious, but critical in today's conversations about faith where subjectivity and relativism seem to reign for many unbelievers.

#3

EVERY NATURAL THING IN GOD'S UNIVERSE HAS A DISTINCT NATURE.

There is something at the metaphysical level that makes a human being distinct from any other creature or part of God's creation. Any conversation today about abortion, gender identity, and a host of greatly contested issues will hinge on your ability to establish this fact.



Classical Apologetics Tenets

Everything we have already touched on is necessary groundwork for establishing a credible case for the truthfulness of theism with contemporary audiences.

#4

GOD EXISTS.

In virtually every conversation or argument with an unbeliever, you will be asked: How can you be sure that God exists? How would you answer that question today?

#5

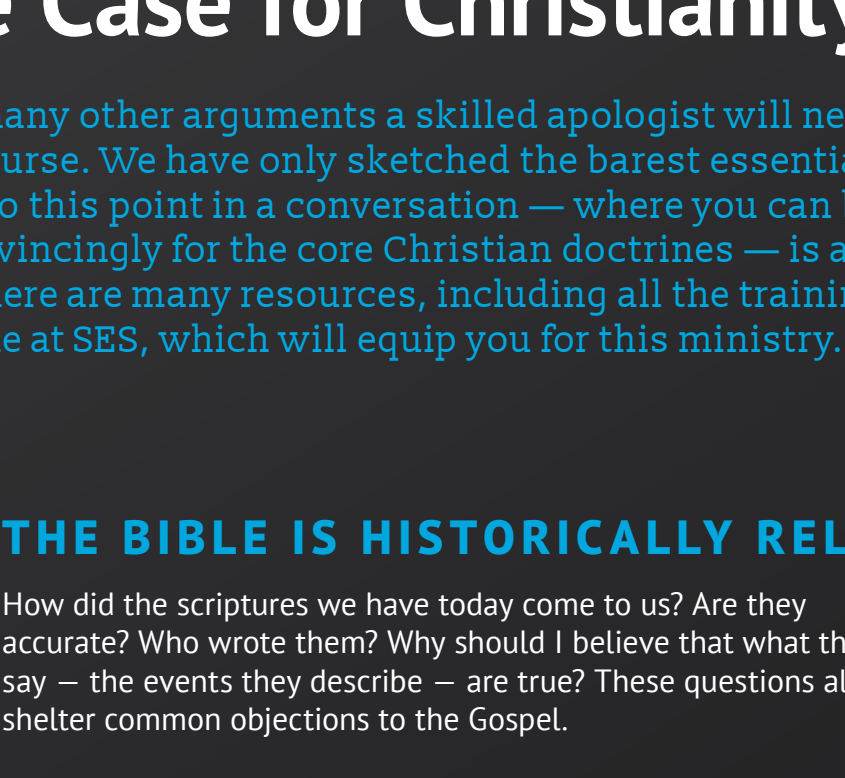
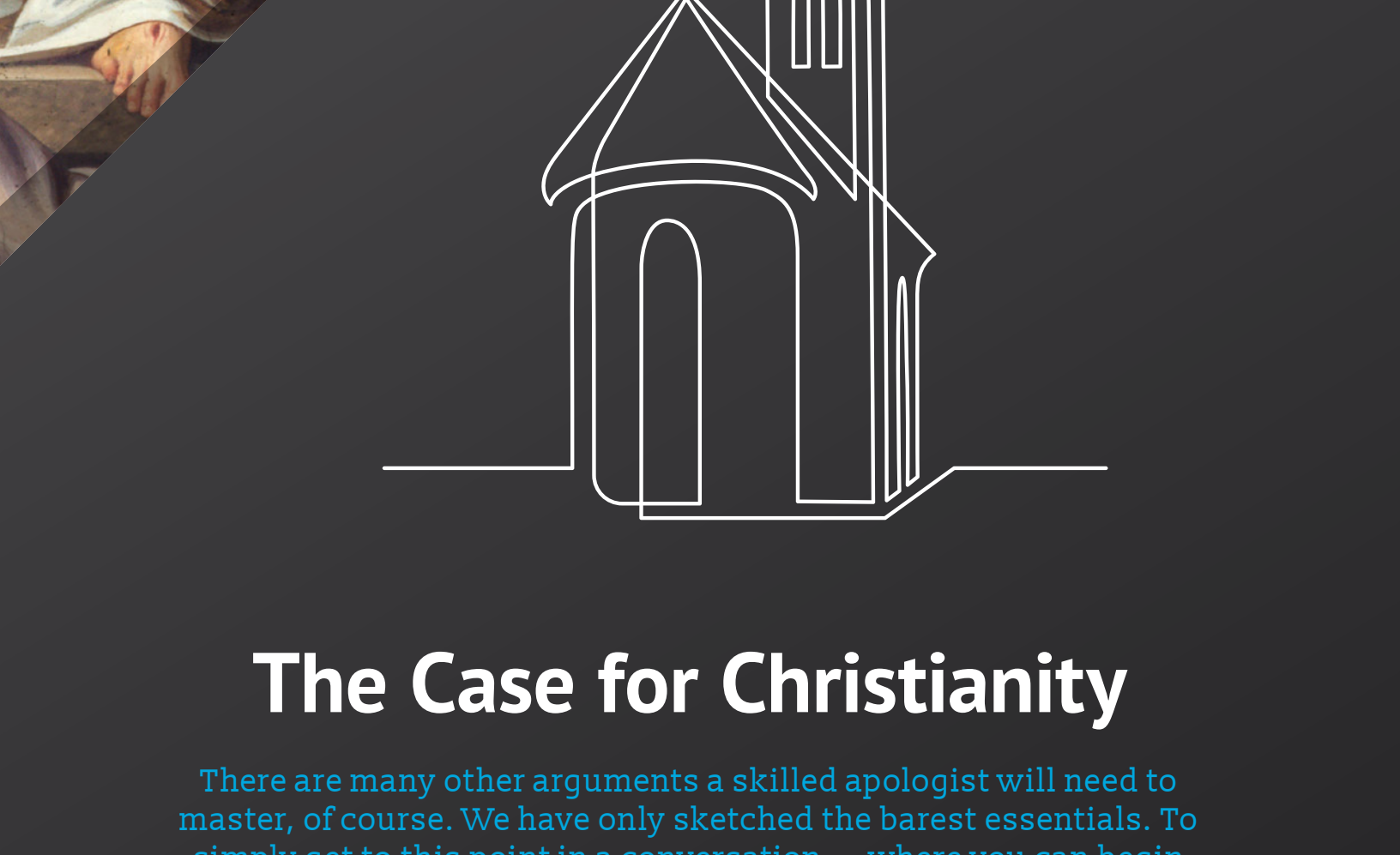
GOD CREATED THE UNIVERSE.

Many people believe in a higher power of some kind, but sound Christian apologetics depends upon building a believable case for God creating the universe in which we all live.

#6

IF GOD EXISTS, THEN MIRACLES ARE POSSIBLE.

If God exists, then there can be acts of God (i.e., miracles). The Bible cannot be true if miracles are not at least possible.



The Case for Christianity

There are many other arguments a skilled apologist will need to master, of course. We have only sketched the barest essentials. To simply get to this point in a conversation — where you can begin arguing convincingly for the core Christian doctrines — is a lot of work. But there are many resources, including all the training we provide at SES, which will equip you for this ministry.

#7

THE BIBLE IS HISTORICALLY RELIABLE.

How did the scriptures we have today come to us? Are they accurate? Who wrote them? Why should I believe that what they say — the events they describe — are true? These questions all shelter common objections to the Gospel.

#8

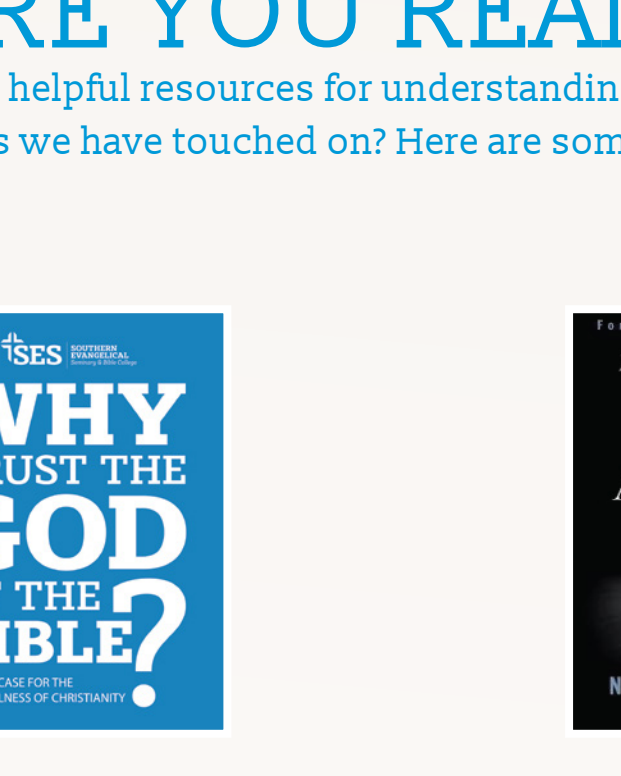
JESUS WAS RESURRECTED, THUS PROVING TO BE GOD.

Given the previous foundation laid forth, evidence for Jesus' resurrection can be marshalled persuasively. This gives authority to his claims of being God in human flesh.

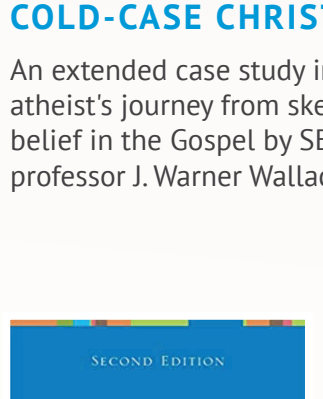
#9

THE BIBLE IS THE INSPIRED, INERRANT WORD OF GOD.

If we can first establish the historical accuracy of Scripture, and that the resurrection really happened, then we may effectively use Jesus' own authoritative words to consider the many other claims of the Bible.

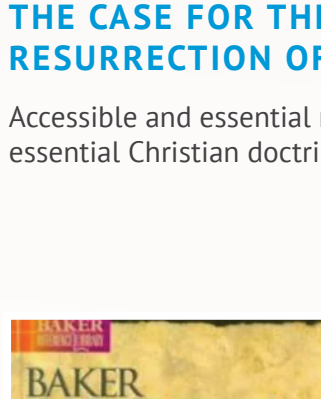


ARE YOU READY to take a deeper dive into some helpful resources for understanding and articulating the essential truths we have touched on? Here are some trustworthy places to turn.



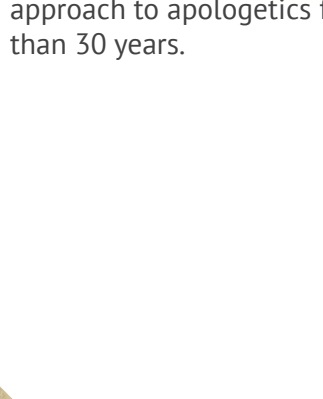
WHY TRUST THE GOD OF THE BIBLE?

Our own, in-house take on presenting a short case for the truthfulness of Christianity.



I DON'T HAVE ENOUGH FAITH TO BE AN ATHEIST

A broad, helpful foundation for conversations with contemporary atheists by SES co-founder Dr. Norm Geisler and SES alum Dr. Frank Turek.



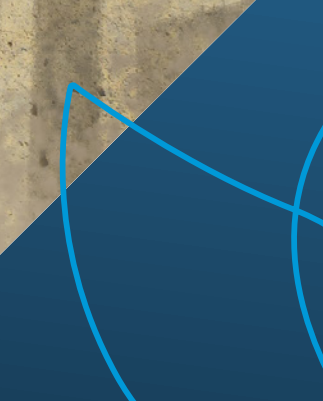
COLD-CASE CHRISTIANITY

An extended case study in one atheist's journey from skepticism to belief in the Gospel by SES adjunct professor J. Warner Wallace.



THE CASE FOR THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS

Accessible and essential reading about the essential Christian doctrine.



CHRISTIAN APOLOGETICS

This best-selling, formative work from SES co-founder Dr. Norm Geisler has been an instrumental help for understanding a systematic approach to apologetics for more than 30 years.



BAKER ENCYCLOPEDIA OF CHRISTIAN APOLOGETICS

Still one of the most comprehensive and detailed resources about Christian apologetics by SES co-founder Dr. Norm Geisler.

There is one thing every Christian apologist must have ...

A thorough, seasoned understanding of why we believe what we believe as Christians. That is one way of summarizing much of what we have mentioned so far.

but there is a second thing most new Christian apologists forget ...

It is just as important to have a thorough, seasoned understanding of why the unbeliever you are talking to believes what they believe.

The strongest arguments for the Gospel often flounder because of a lack of understanding and empathy for the other person's worldview. Gaining that perspective is critical for your efforts to be persuasive. But it is also a basic and humbling expression of love, care, and concern for your opponent in any debate — who is also your neighbor!

As SES co-founder Dr. Norman Geisler once said: "Apologetics is simply to defend the faith and thereby destroy arguments and every proud obstacle against the knowledge of God. It is opening the door, clearing the rubble, and getting rid of the hurdles so that people can come to Christ."

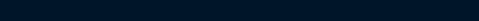
One Last Thing ...

We understand Christian apologetics so thoroughly not only because we teach it in every one of our classes at [Southern Evangelical Seminary](#), but also because we live it. Spend some time browsing our [podcasts](#) and [media resources](#), and you will see how we engage in the toughest conversations and debates you can have about faith.

Self-guided study can only take you so far. We also hope you will consider all that SES has to offer you through [our seminary degree programs](#).

We blend classical apologetics, philosophy, and evangelical theology in [our distinctive approach](#) for training men and women for personal or full-time ministry — with a tuition value that is almost impossible to beat.

May God bless you and all of your efforts to become equipped with the effective tools for ministry in your calling.



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