

# Apologetics

## Why do we have hope?

**1 Peter 3:15, Philippians 3:7-11, Acts 26 14-18, Psalm 119**

***Psalm 19:1 “The Heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims His handiwork.”***

The question I ask myself is this; why do I hold the particular beliefs around which I have shaped my life? Is the motivation from God or something else. But more than that; How can I defend beliefs, which I don't understand?

Paul said, knowing Christ and being transformed into His image is why he studied scripture... and as Peter said, we need to be able to give an account for the reason we hope. So, whether we are pursuing knowledge or sharing truth we need a to do some homework to properly understand our beliefs.

The biblical discipline of defending your faith is called apologetics.

Like a lawyer in a courtroom attempts to clearly establish the facts of a case so that a judge can render a verdict, a Christian apologist makes arguments to establish that his beliefs are both truthful and trustworthy. The difference between a legal and a spiritual argument, is that while a lawyer must rely on the testimony of men the well recorded body of evidence supplied by the Living God, in the form of the Holy Scriptures serves as the jurisprudence for the Christian apologist.

Peter's instruction to be able to give and account for the reason you hope is not merely a suggestion, it is an imperative. He knew the transformative power of God's word. When we seek to understand the basis for the beliefs we hold as Christians, God blesses us with knowledge, wisdom, patience, reassurance, comfort and many other things.

Filling your mind with scripture will embolden your witness. When we accept Christ as Lord of our lives, He fulfils a number of promises to the new believer. One such promise is to live within us as the Holy Spirit. Ephesians calls the word of God, "the sword of the spirit". When you learn scripture, you arm the Holy Spirit with His sword. So, when we use God's words and not our own, God becomes His own witness through the faithful believer. It is amazing that when God gives us an imperative, He gives us a way to accomplish it.

### INTRODUCTION

When we become Christ followers, we accept the gift of eternal salvation from our Creator. Through the process of sanctification God transforms our lives to mirror His image, an image we were created in. In order to understand God's character it is important that we seek Him regularly through the study of His Word. Acknowledging that the creation is not greater than the Creator, and His ways are greater than our ways, it is imperative for all Christ followers to seek an understanding of God's ways.

### DISCUSSION

Read 1 Peter 3:15

What is your account for the reason that hope is in you?

### EXPLANATION

Is it necessary to defend a point that is based on belief and accepted to be true primarily through faith?

Are we called as believers to make arguments in defense of our beliefs?

What is (should be) the source for your beliefs?

### APPLICATION

Have you ever honestly evaluated what you believe?

How are you and your beliefs perceived by others?

What are the pitfalls of not understanding the basis for your beliefs?

Why is it imperative that believers understand 'why they believe'?

### MISSION

Can you give and account for the reason that you have hope?

Imagine that you are in the throne room of Jesus, how would you explain your salvation and faith to Him?

