

UNIT 1

**GRADE
10**

LESSON 5

Aim & Objectives:

How Logic and History are used in developing our faith in God.

Apologetics

Theme:

Understanding God's revelation in History

Teacher's Preparation:

Prepare to extensively discuss the use of logic, reason and history to understand God's revelation, but conclude with the understanding that ultimately faith plays the key and foundational role in ones belief of Christ's incarnation and resurrection. Emphasize the fact that we may not always have clear answers and proof which ultimately keeps things a mystery to our limited minds and intellect.

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Acts 17:22-31 (NRSV)

²² Then Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, "Athenians, I see how extremely religious you are in every way.

²³ For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, 'To an unknown god.' What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. ²⁴ The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, ²⁵ nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things. ²⁶ From one ancestor he made all nations to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live, ²⁷ so that they would search for God and perhaps grope for him and find him—though indeed he is not far from each one of us. ²⁸ For 'In him we live and move and have our being'; as even some of your own poets have said,

'For we too are his offspring.'

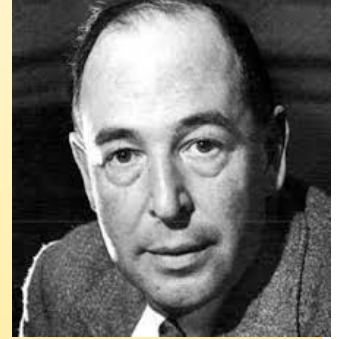
²⁹ Since we are God's offspring, we ought not to think that the deity is like gold, or silver, or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of mortals. ³⁰ While God has overlooked the times of human ignorance, now he commands all people everywhere to repent, ³¹ because he has fixed a day on which he will have the world judged in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead."



Student's Introduction to the Lesson:

In the first unit of this book, we covered many concepts of God's Wonderful world. However, the idea and existence of God are often debated. In a 2011 Gallup survey, it showed that over **90%** of Americans believed in God. However, it seems that more often than not, we as Christians are challenged to prove the existence of God and furthermore, prove Jesus Christ is God.

Clive Staples Lewis, also known as C.S. Lewis was a novelist, theologian and apologist of the Christian faith. He is best known for writing fictional stories such as *The Screwtape Letters* and *The Chronicles of Narnia*, both of which have a strong Christian theme. His book entitled, *Mere Christianity* was voted best book of the twentieth century by *Christianity Today* in 2000. Because of works like this, Lewis was regarded as one of the greatest Christian apologists. *Apologetics is the understanding the revelation of God using historical references, logic and philosophy.*



Lewis, born in Belfast, Ireland was the grandson of an Anglican priest and was raised in a church-going family. However he became an atheist at the age of 15 because he viewed religion as a chore and duty. He was, "very angry with God for not existing." While in Oxford, due to the influences of friends such as J. R. Tolkien, author of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*, Lewis once again embraced Christianity in 1931. Lewis passed away on November 22, 1963, but his death was overshadowed by the assassination of President John F. Kennedy and media coverage was insignificant. His faith and belief in Christ can be summed up by his quote, "I believe in Christianity as I believe that the Sun has risen, not only because I see it but because by it I see everything else. "

Bible Exposition:**Apologetics - Science and art of defending the faith**

Apo – "from"

Logos – "Word", "Logic", "Reasoning"

Noun – Defense

Verb – to make your defense

Biblical References:

Act 9:22, Acts 17:2 , Acts 18:4, Acts 19:8-9, Isaiah 1:18, 1 Thessalonians 5:21, Luke 16:31

LOGIC: The existence of creation strongly suggests the existence of a creator.

1. If something exists, it either: Comes from something else which means it is circular – Chicken or the egg?
2. Comes from nothing. Can you make a cake right now while sitting in this class? No ingredients = no cake!
3. Comes from something that has always existed = **ETERNAL**. This "something" must exist outside of time and space. Exodus 3:14

CREATION COMES FROM SOMETHING ETERNAL, SO IS IT:

1. Eternal Universe or
2. Eternal Being

Eternal Universe

Its common knowledge that the universe isn't eternal, but had a beginning ten to twenty billion years ago, and that it is expanding. The Hubble Telescope has proven that in recent years.

For something to bring itself into being it must have the power of being within itself. It must at least have enough power to cause its own being. If it derives its being from some other source, then it clearly is not self-existent or self-created. It would be, plainly and simply, an effect. It also would have to have existed before it was created. Before it had any being with which to exercise power, it would have to have the power of existing.

1. Nothing finite can create infinite. Anything that will ultimately die or end does not have the capacity to create something that will live forever.
2. Only animate can create animate and inanimate, not vice versa. Can you tell a bottle to make a puppy? No.
3. The concept of an eternal being is the only way to explain the first creation.

Teleological argument

1. The universe is carefully structured and organized.
2. Creation is too intricate, systematic, adaptive, purposeful or beautiful to have occurred randomly or accidentally.
3. Therefore, creation must have been created by an intelligent, wise, or purposeful being.

Moral argument – There is a right and wrong. Moral values exist whether or not a person or culture believes them. Even if an individual does not acknowledge God, the moral values are from Him. People take these for granted as basic. Examples: Stealing and murder are condemned in these law codes while honoring parents and keeping marriage vows are applauded. Child abuse, violence and rape are seen as wrong while caring and nurturing of children is appreciated.

Characteristics of an Eternal Being:

1. Eternal
2. He is the cause or creator of all we see and do not see
3. Infinitely knowledgeable – Omniscient
4. Possesses infinite power - Omnipotent
5. Exists everywhere - Omnipresent
6. Unchanging Nature

.....everything points to God



Rev. Matt Slick, the President and Founder of the Christian Apologetics and Research Ministry, says, "Logic is typically very important in apologetics. To defend the faith, the Christian must use truth, facts, and reason appropriately and prayerfully. The Christian should listen to objections and make rational comments in direct response to the issues raised. Logic is simply a tool in the arsenal of Christian apologetics. Logic is a system of reasoning. It is the principles of proper thinking used to arrive at correct conclusions. **Logic is not what saves a person. Jesus does that and we are justified by faith (Rom. 5:1).** Therefore, the proper use of logic in apologetics is to remove intellectual barriers that hinder a person from accepting Jesus as Savior. Logic is not to be looked at as the answer to every problem facing Christianity or every objection raised against it. Logic has its limits. It cannot guarantee wisdom. It cannot prove or disprove inspiration or love. It cannot replace the intuition gained through experience, the prompting of the Holy Spirit, nor the clear truth of God's word. Nevertheless, logic is still very valuable and can be quite powerfully used by people..."

JESUS, SON OF GOD, IN HISTORY

Jewish Sources: Josephus, Jewish historian (AD 37-100) wrote of Jesus:

"About this time appeared Jesus, a wise man and He drew to Himself many and when Pilate, at the denunciation of those that are foremost among us, had condemned Him to the cross, those who had first loved Him did not abandon Him. The tribe of Christians named after Him did not cease to this day." (Jewish Antiquities, 18.3.3 §63)

There has not been any dispute regarding the accuracy of his statement regarding the crucifixion of Jesus, which means he had to have been born.

Talmud - Made up of rabbinical writings dealing with Jewish laws, ethics, customs and history.

"Jesus was a transgressor in Israel, who practiced magic, scorned the words of the wise, led people astray and said He had come to add to the law."

"On the eve of the Passover, Yeshu was hanged. Forty days before the execution took place; a herald went forth and cried: "He is going forth to be stoned because he has practiced sorcery and enticed Israel to apostasy. Anyone who can say anything in his favor let him come forward and plead on his behalf." But since nothing was brought forward in his favor he was hanged on the eve of the Passover"

GENTILE AND ROMAN SOURCES:

TACITUS-Gentile/Roman historian, in his Annals, c. AD 115, describes the Roman Emperor Nero's actions after he started the great fire of Rome, c. AD 64:



“Consequently, to get rid of the report, Nero fastened the guilt and inflicted the most exquisite tortures on a class hated for their abominations, called Christians by the populace. Christus, from whom the name had its origin, suffered the extreme penalty during the reign of Tiberius at the hands of one of our procurators, Pontius Pilatus, and a most mischievous superstition, thus checked for the moment, again broke out not only in Judæa, the first source of the evil, but even in Rome, where all things hideous and shameful from every part of the world find their centre and become popular.” Annals 15 -44

Pliny the Younger - the provincial governor of Pontus and Bithynia, wrote to Emperor Trajan c. 112 concerning how to deal with Christians, who refused to worship the emperor, and instead worshiped "Christus".

“They were in the habit of meeting on a certain fixed day before it was light, when they sang an anthem to Christ as God and bound themselves by a sovereign oath not to commit any wicked deed, but to abstain from all fraud, theft, adultery, never to break their word or deny a trust when called upon.”

Lucian, a second century Romano-Syrian satirist, who wrote in Greek, wrote: “The Christians, you know, worship a man to this day — the distinguished personage who introduced their novel rites, and was crucified on that account... You see, these misguided creatures start with the general conviction that they are immortal for all time, which explains the contempt of death and voluntary self-devotion which are so common among them; and then it was impressed on them by their original lawgiver that they are all brothers, from the moment that they are converted, and deny the gods of Greece, and worship the crucified sage and live after his laws.”

Ref: Suetonius-Gentile Historian & **Phlegon**-Gentile Historian

THE CROSS

Cross is equivalent to the modern day electric chair, yet the making of the sign of the cross is regarded as the ultimate form of “body worship.”

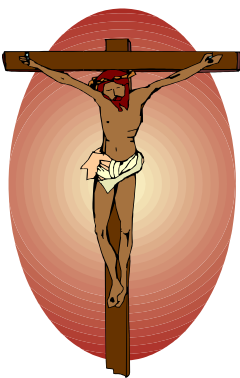
Tertullian – 145 – 220 AD. Early Christian author and Christian apologist said this about the cross:

“In all travels and movements, in all our coming in and going out, in putting on our shoes, at the bath, at the table, in lighting our candles, in lying down, in sitting, whatever employment occupies us, we remember our Lord and mark our forehead with the sign of the cross.”

The symbol of the cross was used back in the second century and is still relevant aspect of our worship.

Messianic Prophecies: (Reference Only)

There are 60 major messianic prophecies and 270 corollaries that were fulfilled in Jesus Christ.



1. Isaiah 7:14 – the virgin will give birth to a son and you will call him Immanuel.
2. Genesis 9 and 10. Noah had three sons, Shem, Japheth and Ham. Messiah has to come from Shem
3. Genesis 12, 17 and 22. Abraham had Isaac and Ishmael and God chose Isaac.
4. Genesis 28, 35:10-12 Isaac had two sons, Jacob and Esau. God chose Jacob.
5. Jacob had 12 sons, the twelve tribes of Israel. God chose the tribe of Judah. Jesse was from the line of Judah. Isaiah 11:1-5
6. Jesse had 8 children. God chose David who is in the lineage of Jesus. (Isaiah 11:10)
7. Zechariah 12:10 – the one they have pierced
8. Messiah will be betrayed, by a friend, for thirty pieces, of silver, that will be cast onto the floor, of the temple and used to buy a potter field. (Zech 11:11-13, Psalm 41, Jeremiah 32:6-15, Matt 27:3-10)
9. Micah 5:2 – Messiah's Birth
10. Isaiah 53:7 – Messiah - As suffering servant

Apostolic Evidences:

1. Persecuted
2. Tortured
3. Death
4. Did not back down from their faith
5. Establishment of the early Churches

“When in history have sane men ignored personal gain and freely chosen persecution, torture and death to reserve what they knew to be a lie.” - Christian Handbook of Reason and Insight for Scientists and Technologists.

EMPTY TOMB:

Matt 28:13-15 – There was no body. They had to make something up. It should have been treated as a shrine.

1 Corinthians 15:14 – If Christ was not raised from the dead, all preaching is useless.

Mystery

In all religions there is an aspect of tradition, mystery and faith. The Mar Thoma Church, belongs to the Eastern Tradition and does not try to define and explain everything black and white, instead we also follow the same.

Certain things which are beyond our ability to comprehend, we accept them as a 'mystery.' We acknowledge that we are finite creatures and our God is infinite, so logic simply tells us that we will not always have answers to questions and proof for everything because we are limited and cannot comprehend God. There will always be a mystery which strengthens our faith.



Group Discussion:

What is the evidence of the presence of God in our lives? Discuss how we have experienced God in our personal lives.

**Values For Life**

Clark Pinnock, Professor of Systematic Theology from McMaster Divinity College once said, “Apologetics deals in an area of pre-evangelism. It is at the factual and foundational level of understanding Christian truth, historical and theological data. It is cognitive and rational and logical. It is tragic when Christians think that it constitutes the epitome of Christian belief. Christianity is not essentially a belief system to be defended, but a life to be lived.”

Life Response

John 14:16 – And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever

Ephesians 2:8-9 – For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God—⁹ not the result of works, so that no one may boast.

John 20: 31 – But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

Memory Verse:

“But in your hearts sanctify Christ as Lord. Always be ready to make your defense to anyone who demands from you an accounting for the hope that is in you;”

1 Peter 3:15

Lesson Review:**Multiple Choice**

1. Logos means:

- a)Word b)Defense c)Symbol d)Proof

2. Which of the following was not an apostolic evidence:

- a)Tortured b)Death c)Established Churches d)Claimed to be Messiah

Short Answer:

1. List the characteristics of an Eternal Being
2. Explain how mystery strengthens our faith.

Essay:

Prepare an essay based on the subject of Apologetics for a debate with an atheist.

- a. Introduction
- b. Background of Apologetics
- c. Use logic, history and biblical references
- d. Conclude with the significance of the aspect of mystery and faith