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A (Not So) Brief Defense
Christianity

| Introduction

Mind Games Survival Course Manual



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A (Not So) Brief Defense of Christianity

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Introduction

A. Faith

Everybody has **faith**. From the meticulous scientist to the most irrational religious fanatic, everyone believes in something, and everyone acts on that belief somehow. The question is not whether we WILL have faith; it is whether or not the things we believe are **true**.

Unfortunately, many people never evaluate the basis for their beliefs. They go with the flow of society, which today is dominated by the idea of **religious pluralism**. Religious pluralism means that we look at one another's beliefs and in effect say, "I'm OK and you're OK." A remark often heard, especially on campus is, "I don't think it really makes much difference what you believe as long as you're sincere."

B. Truth

Many of us are hesitant or feel it's wrong to make distinctions between people or their ideas. This is because we feel it is arrogant, exclusionary, undemocratic, or socially inappropriate. We want people to like us, so we try not to be disagreeable. Ironically, this very pluralistic environment creates a hesitancy to express personal convictions for fear of offending another. In reality, this creates an atmosphere where all views held are of equal value and are therefore "true." It also may explain why so many people today regard themselves as atheists or agnostics. Viewing so many "religious" options which profess to be THE truth, they become agnostics or atheists, disclaiming the religious idea of "faith" altogether.

Some militant atheists propose philosophical and scientific "proofs" to explain away the existence of God, hoping to convince others logically. Other atheists and agnostics have not come to their beliefs logically, but rather believe what

they do simply because they prefer or are more comfortable with it.

C. The Need for Apologetics

A committed, thinking Christian's desire must be to challenge that complacency. If there is such a thing as truth, and if different world views do contradict one another, then we need to make sure that the one we choose is the right one and that we have good reasons for believing it to be so. Further, 1 Peter 3:15 tells us that we are to be ready always to give a "defense" (*apologia*), to give answers, reasons for why we believe as we do.

This particular outline is designed to provide some of those answers: thus, the title, "A Brief Defense of Christianity." There are three primary reasons why such apologetical information is important:

1. The religious pluralism rampant in our culture demands it. Many today are spiritually hungry and looking for truth in a culture of "isms" very similar to what we find in the Graeco-Roman world of the New Testament. It was in this kind of cultural environment that Christianity came, flourished, and ultimately dominated Western Civilization for 15 centuries.

It has been said that Christianity prevailed because the first Christians "out-thought" and "out-loved" the ancient world. Many contemporary Christians are so enamored of having a personal "experience" with God in the safety of their various religious enclaves they have little time left to defend the faith and convert the pagans. *Mind Games* is designed to help us better connect with the wider world through solid thinking and loving care.

2. In the light of Peter's admonition above, Christians are to prepare themselves to share their faith with others and help remove the obstacles to faith which hinder some non-Christians from giving serious consideration to Christ and His claims upon their lives. Apologetics can help remove these obstacles and demonstrate the "reasonableness" of Christianity.
3. Apologetics can also serve to strengthen the faith of young Christians as well as provide them with the discernment necessary to identify and counter non-Christian thinking and world views. This enhances personal spiritual growth and better equips the Christian for more effective evangelism.

Finally, we noted above that EVERYONE has faith—atheist, agnostic, and Christian. The real issue is not to have faith, but rather to have a worthy OBJECT for our faith. As you walk out on a frozen pond, which would you prefer, a LITTLE faith in a sheet of ice two-feet thick, or a LOT of faith in 1/4 inch of ice? Faith is important, but the object of our faith is all-important.

The material in this outline is designed to help assure you that to stand upon Christ and the world view which He taught is to rest upon an object most worthy of your faith. To demonstrate this, we are going to ask and

then answer some basic questions concerning the truthfulness of the Christian faith.

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