



TWELFTH GRADE

Discipleship Essentials Pathway

DISCIPLESHIP ESSENTIALS PATHWAY

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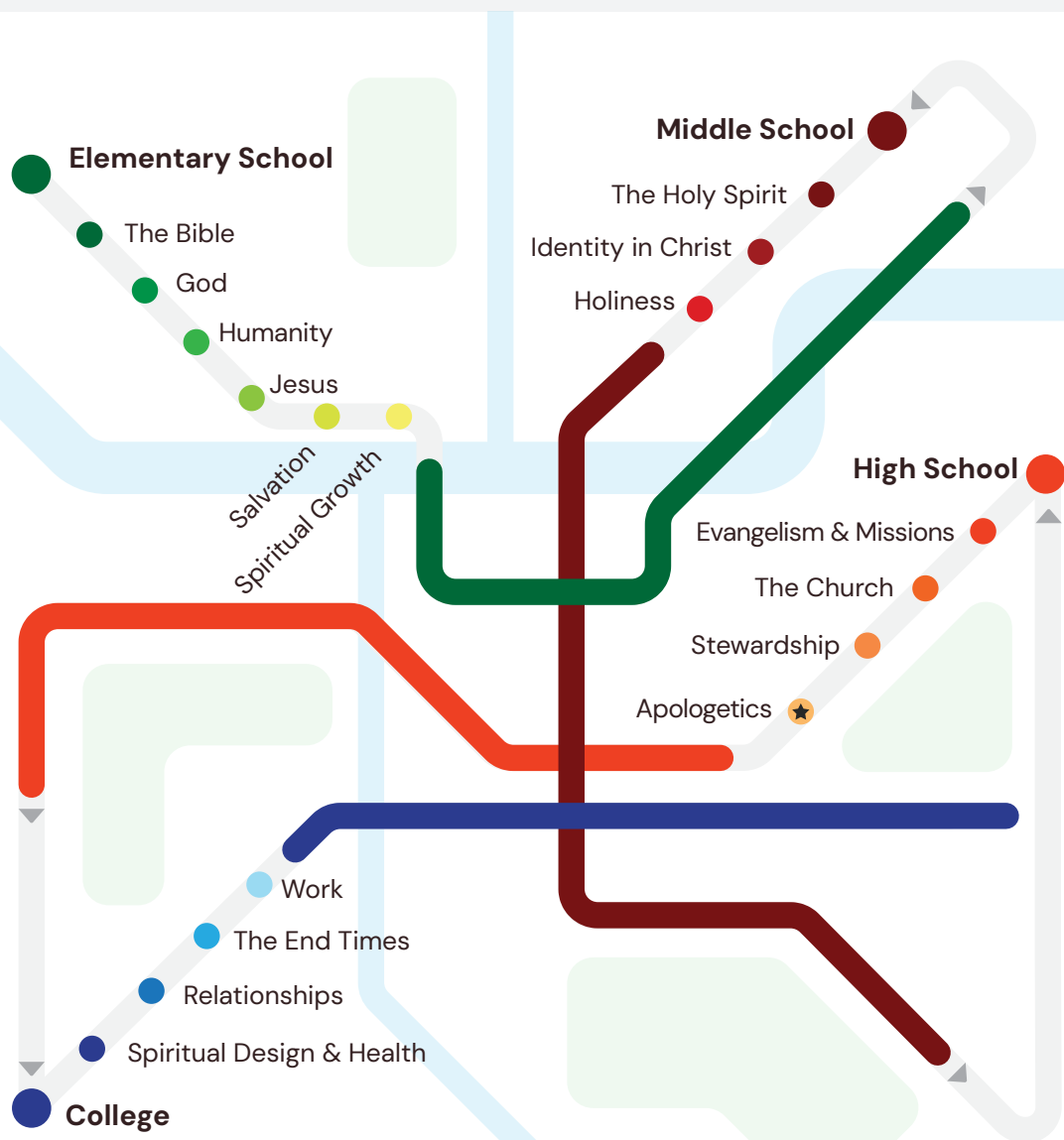
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Responding to Opposition

System Map

LEGEND

- Elementary School
- Middle School
- High School
- College



Discipleship Essentials Pathway

Detailed Overview

Elementary Schoolers

- Kindergarten: The Bible
- First Grade: God
- Second Grade: Humanity
- Third Grade: Jesus
- Fourth Grade: Salvation
- Fifth Grade: Spiritual Growth

Middle Schoolers

- Sixth Grade: The Holy Spirit
- Seventh Grade: Identity in Christ
- Eighth Grade: Holiness

High Schoolers

- Ninth Grade: Evangelism and Missions
- Tenth Grade: The Church
- Eleventh Grade: Stewardship
- Twelfth Grade: Apologetics

College Students

- Freshman: Spiritual Design & Health
- Sophomore: Relationships
- Junior: The End Times
- Senior: Work

Introduction

Note: You may be a student going through this Pathway on your own. That is awesome! If you would like, continue through the Pathway on your own; but you may also consider doing so with a small group leader, friend, or mentor. This is also an opportunity to invite someone in your family to study with you. Feel free to reach out to the Student Ministry Team for help or guidance as you walk through your own discipleship journey.

To be a follower of Jesus means that we are to lead others to follow Jesus, too. Contrary to the spirit of the famous “The Buck Stops Here” placard on President Harry S. Truman’s desk, Jesus’ desk placard might have said something like “You’re One Link in a Long Chain.” You don’t have to disciple anyone alone; you’re an essential part of the process. To be a *disciple* of Jesus is to be a *discipler* of others, just as Jesus told us in what is known as the Great Commission:

Then Jesus came to them. He said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. So you must go and make disciples of all nations. Baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Teach them to obey everything I have commanded you. And you can be sure that I am always with you, to the very end.”
– Matthew 28:18–20

Often, when we think of people discipling to fulfill the Great Commission, we think of men and women discipling other men and women at coffee shops, a collegiate minister discipling students at the student union, or perhaps a church staff discipling its members on the church campus. All of that is true, of course, but one of the most important places for discipleship is our homes. As a Christian, God has called you to disciple others; as a Christian parent, guardian, or mentor, He has called you to disciple children. This is the central point of what God told His people, the Israelites, through Moses: “The commandments I give you today must be in your hearts. Make sure

your children learn them. Talk about them when you are at home. Talk about them when you walk along the road. Speak about them when you go to bed. And speak about them when you get up” (Deuteronomy 6:6–7). This is your highest calling as a parent and family—and it’s what we want to help you with through the *Discipleship Essentials Pathway*.

How to Use the Discipleship Pathway

The *Discipleship Essentials Pathway* is built on a framework of seventeen modules to be used one per year. This book includes Module 13: Apologetics and is designed to be used with twelfth graders. Modules 1–6 are to be used for kindergartners through fifth graders. Modules 7–9 are to be used with sixth through eighth graders. Modules 10–13 are to be used with ninth through twelfth graders. And finally, Modules 14–17 are to be used with college students. Throughout the seventeen modules, you will have the opportunity to engage with the core doctrines of the Christian faith and explore many practical aspects of following Jesus.

Each module contains twelve lessons, one for each month beginning in August and ending in July of the following year. Here’s how to use the *Pathway*:

The First Week of August

STEP ONE

Choose a day and time when it is easiest to block out about fifteen minutes for a family devotion each week. Many families find dinner time or bedtime as the ideal times for family devotions. Of course, if you already have a regular family devotion time, that would be the best time to choose.

STEP TWO

During your family devotion time in the first week of August, open the *Discipleship Essentials Pathway* book to August’s content.

STEP THREE

Begin by reading the catechism to your family. A catechism is a method of instruction based on a question-and-answer format that has been used throughout church history. The catechism provides the main idea your family will focus on for the month. You may notice definitions or further inspections provided. These are provided to help your student learn these important terms or dive deeper into the topic.

STEP FOUR

Next, read the Bible story to your family either from the *Pathway* book or from a Bible. The NLT is used in Modules 7 through 13.

STEP FIVE

Now, it is time to read the devotional to your family. Discuss the standing discussion questions.

STEP SIX

Next, find the memory verse and prayer prompt for week 1. These will provide your focus for the rest of the week. Begin by reading the memory verse a few times, inviting your twelfth grader to say as much with you as possible. Then, close your devotional time in prayer, using the prompt as a guideline for what to pray about. Of course, you can pray about more than that, but be sure to at least pray about the topic provided.

That's it! You're done.

You will notice that each unit concludes with a next step, challenging thought, or reflection questions. If you choose, these are for you to use during the week and on the rest of the family devotion days of the month.

During the week, look for opportunities to discuss the main ideas of the catechism, Bible story, and devotional you covered. This is in the spirit of Deuteronomy 6:7, which calls us to talk about God throughout the day and as we go. The goal is to help your student keep God at the top of the mind and deep down in the heart. Also, continue working on memorizing the memory verse and praying for the topic of the prayer prompt.

The Second, Third, and Fourth Weeks of August

STEP ONE

During your family devotion time on the second, third, and fourth weeks of the month, go over the catechism again, perhaps inviting your student to memorize it too, along with the memory verses.

STEP TWO

You do not need to read the Bible story or devotion again, but of course, you can if you want.

STEP THREE

Spend more time working on the memory verse.

STEP FOUR

Close your time in prayer, once again using the prayer prompt as your baseline.

The First Week of September

Once the calendar flips to September, it's time to move on to the next unit, repeating the process. Then, once July arrives, it will be time to get Module 14 to begin using it next August.

A FEW FINAL TIPS

If you have multiple children going through different modules, that's awesome! As a family, go through the lesson with the youngest child in the first week, and move to the second youngest the next week, and so on. Review together as needed, and turn your prayer prompts into a prayer list!

If you miss a family devotion one week, that's okay! Give yourself grace and pick back up next week. Consistency over the long term is the key to family discipleship.

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As you and your family grow more comfortable using the *Discipleship Essentials Pathway*, try to encourage your child or student to ask questions. Dialogue is always better than monologue when it comes to discipleship.

If you are just starting your journey using the *Discipleship Essentials Pathway* with this Module, you might consider using what you have missed during Christmas break, Spring break, or the summer as a short-term intensive, covering one unit per day instead of per month, and forgoing memorizing the memory verses. Of course, there's also nothing at all wrong with starting right where you are and moving forward without ever looking back!

If you already have a family devotions plan, or if you find one along the way, feel free to couple it with the *Pathway*. Do both on the same day or perhaps choose a second day to stretch your discipleship efforts further throughout the week.

The *Discipleship Essentials Pathway* doesn't provide you with all the answers about our faith, but it should give you a solid framework from which you can explore additional questions as they come up.

The Gospel Message

In the beginning, God created the universe (Genesis 1:1). He formed light and darkness, land and sea, fish and birds, plants and animals. But on the final day of creation, He saved His best work for last: He made people. God created us in His image (Genesis 1:27) and designed us to love, trust, worship, and follow Him.

However, God didn't force us to love Him; He gave us a choice. We can choose to trust and obey Him, or we can go our own way. When we choose to go our own way instead of God's way, that's called *sin*, and sin breaks our relationship with God. The Bible tells us: "Everyone has sinned. No one measures up to God's glory" (Romans 3:23). The bad news is that our sin separates us from God, and we cannot fix this problem alone. We need help.

The good news is that God, in His great love, made a way for us to be forgiven through Jesus. God sent Jesus, His one and only Son, to live a perfect life and take the punishment for our sins by dying on the cross (John 3:6, 2 Corinthians 5:21). But He didn't stay dead. On the third day, He rose again, defeating sin and death so we could have new and eternal life in Him. Jesus did for us what we could never do for ourselves.

God now offers each of us the opportunity to be restored to a right relationship with Him. This requires us to turn away from sin and choose to put our faith in Jesus as Savior and Lord. The Bible tells us: "If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." (Romans 10:9). We trust Jesus as Savior, because His death in our place is the only way we can be forgiven for our sins. We trust and follow Jesus as Lord, meaning we use our lives for Him above all else. When we trust Jesus, we receive forgiveness and are saved from the power and punishment of our sins.

If you're ready to follow Jesus, here's what you need to do:

01

Admit that you are a sinner in need of forgiveness.

02

Believe that Jesus is God's Son, who died for your sins and rose again.

03

Confess Jesus as your Savior and Lord, choosing to follow Him daily.

The following is an example of what to pray if you are ready to put your faith and trust in Jesus as your Savior and Lord today. The words themselves aren't special. It's your heart behind them if you believe it.

Dear God,

I know that You created me in Your image to love, trust, and follow You. But I confess that I have sinned against You. I have chosen my own way instead of Yours, and my sins have separated me from You. And I know that I cannot fix this problem on my own.

Thank You for loving me so much that You sent Your Son Jesus to die on the cross for my sins. I believe that He paid my punishment, and I believe that He rose from the dead, defeating sin and death so that I could have new life in Him.

Today, I turn away from my sin and I surrender my life to You. I ask for Your forgiveness and place my faith in Jesus as my Savior and Lord. Please change my heart, help me to follow You daily, and give me the strength to live for You.

Thank You for Your love and the gift of salvation.

In Jesus name I pray, Amen.

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If you just prayed that prayer for the first time, don't keep it to yourself, share it with someone! Tell a parent, guardian, pastor, or trusted Christian friend. They would love to celebrate with you, encourage you, and help you to take your next steps in following Jesus.

What Is Apologetics?

What is apologetics?

Apologetics is the use of Scripture, theology, logic, and reason to defend the Christian faith. While evangelism can be thought of as advancing the gospel as if we are on offense, apologetics is more of defending the gospel from attacks or denials as if we are on defense.



Definition

Apologetics: the intellectual defense of the Christian faith.

When most people hear *apologetics*, they think of apologizing, or saying that you are sorry. But that is not what this word means. Instead, it comes from a Greek word that means “defense,” like what a lawyer provides a defendant at a trial.

Bible Story

¹ Paul and Silas then traveled through the towns of Amphipolis and Apollonia and came to Thessalonica, where there was a Jewish synagogue.

² As was Paul’s custom, he went to the synagogue service, and for three Sabbaths in a row he used the Scriptures to reason with the people.

³ He explained the prophecies and proved that the Messiah must suffer and rise from the dead. He said, “This Jesus I’m telling you about is the Messiah.”

⁴ Some of the Jews who listened were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, along with many God-fearing Greek men and quite a few prominent women.

— Acts 17:1–4

Discussion Questions

01 What do these verses tell us about God, Jesus, or the Holy Spirit?

02 What does this tell us about ourselves or other people?

03 Based on these verses and truths, what should I stop doing, start doing, or keep doing?

Devotion

Suppose someone told you that they believe George Washington wasn't real. What would you do? You would probably provide evidence to prove that George Washington was indeed real. You might show them a history book or go talk to your history teacher. You might take them to the Smithsonian Museum of American History in Washington DC and show them George Washington's actual uniform. You might even take a survey with as many people as you could to show pretty much everyone else knows he was real. In short, you would collect evidence to defend the fact that a man named George Washington was real.

That's what apologetics is all about. When you hear the word *apologetics*, you probably think of *apology*, which makes you think of saying you are sorry. But that's not what apologetics is. Instead, apologetics comes from a Greek word meaning "defense." So when we speak of apologetics of the Christian faith, we mean a defense of the Christian faith. Apologetics uses the Bible and reason to respond to others when they deny the gospel.

This is what we see Paul do in Thessalonica in Acts 17. When Paul went into the synagogue three weeks in a row, he didn't just quote Bible verses to the Jews there. He certainly used the Scriptures, but he also *reasoned* with those gathered. He very likely used logic and facts to explain what the Old Testament prophecies meant and how Jesus had fulfilled them. He probably also shared his experience of his encounter with Jesus on the Damascus Road and shared other things that had happened to him and other followers of Jesus. In essence, he would have built a case showing that Jesus is the Son of God and that by believing in Him, you can find salvation, which would have answered the objections raised. Some of the Jews were "persuaded." That word means they were initially critical of the gospel, but Paul's convincing apologetics won them over.

At this point, we need to be careful in two key ways, though. First, we can't make the mistake of treating apologetics like trying to win an argument. The goal isn't to show

someone else they are wrong and we are right; it is to show someone Jesus so they trust in Him. Second, we have to be careful not to engage in apologetics with the wrong posture—one of hostility. Every argument is a disagreement, but not every disagreement must be an argument. We need to be careful, with the Holy Spirit's help, not to let our emotions get the best of us when we are defending the faith. Instead, like Paul, we should strive to patiently, lovingly, and convincingly present Scripture, facts, logic, and reason to win someone to Christ, not an argument.

WEEK ONE

Memory Verse

We destroy every proud obstacle that keeps people from knowing God. We capture their rebellious thoughts and teach them to obey Christ. — 2 Corinthians 10:5

Prayer

Ask God to begin softening the hearts and opening the minds of people He will put in your path who need to hear the truth of the gospel.

WEEK TWO

Memory Verse

Speaking of these things in all of his letters. Some of his comments are hard to understand, and those who are ignorant and unstable have twisted his letters to mean something quite different, just

as they do with other parts of Scripture. And this will result in their destruction. — 2 Peter 3:16

Prayer

Ask God to give you a soft heart for all unbelievers, even those who are hostile to the Christian faith.

WEEK THREE

Memory Verse

As was Paul's custom, he went to the synagogue service, and for three Sabbaths in a row he used the Scriptures to reason with the people. — Acts 17:2

Prayer

Thank God for giving us a faith that isn't blind but is built on facts.

WEEK FOUR

Memory Verse

While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was deeply troubled by all the idols he saw everywhere in the city. He went to the synagogue to reason with the Jews and the God-fearing Gentiles, and he

spoke daily in the public square to all who happened to be there. — Acts 17:16–17

Prayer

Thank God for the example of Paul and other believers today who are gifted in apologetics.



Challenging Thought

Every argument is a disagreement, but not every disagreement must be an argument. What does this mean for your conversations with others?



Reflection Questions

01 How would you define apologetics in your own words?

02 What are some of the objections to the gospel that you have heard or that you can anticipate hearing?

03 Which do you think is most important in apologetics: the Bible or logic? Why?

04 For practice, how would you set out to convince yourself of the truthfulness of the gospel?

Why We Defend the Faith

Why do we need to defend the Christian faith?

God does not call on us to defend the Christian faith because He is limited; He has been proven capable of protecting it from being proven untrue and preventing the church from falling time and again. Instead, God calls us to defend the faith to advance the faith. Through our defense, God opens the eyes of the spiritually blind, softens unbelievers' hearts, and quiets the lies of false teachings.

Bible Story

³ Dear friends, I had been eagerly planning to write to you about the salvation we all share. But now I find that I must write about something else, urging you to defend the faith that God has entrusted once for all time to his holy people. ⁴ I say this because some ungodly people have wormed their way into your churches, saying that God's marvelous grace allows us to live immoral lives. The condemnation of such people was recorded long ago, for they have denied our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

...

²⁰ But you, dear friends, must build each other up in your most holy faith, pray in the power of the Holy Spirit, ²¹ and await the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will bring you eternal life. In this way, you will keep yourselves safe in God's love.

²² And you must show mercy to those whose faith is wavering. ²³ Rescue others by snatching them from the flames of judgment. Show mercy to still others, but do so with great caution, hating the sins that contaminate their lives.

— Jude vv. 3–4, 20–23

Discussion Questions

01 What do these verses tell us about God, Jesus, or the Holy Spirit?

02 What does this tell us about ourselves or other people?

03 Based on these verses and truths, what should I stop doing, start doing, or keep doing?

Devotion

When we think of defending the faith, we might picture a castle under siege. The castle represents our faith, shut up tightly with a deep moat around it. Those within it are huddled under cover, hoping to survive the onslaught. Meanwhile, outside the castle are the numerous opponents of the faith. They are busy slinging arrows and boulders at the castle, trying to exploit any weakness and anticipating overrunning it, or starving those within its walls.

But that is far from what it looks like for us to defend the faith. Yes, the Christian faith is often under attack, but no, it is not in a state of desperation or danger. The Christian faith is not on the brink of collapse. The gospel is not showing cracks and weaknesses. The church is not on the defensive. After all, remember what Jesus told His disciples about the church: “all the powers of hell will not conquer it” (Matthew 16:18). Some other translations, like the NIV, translate “the powers of hell” as the “gates of Hades.” That’s a picture of the church on the offensive, laying siege to the enemy!

So, if the church is not under threat, why do we need to defend the faith? That’s a good question; the answer is in the letter Jesus’ half-brother, Jude, wrote.

At the start of his letter, Jude says he wanted to write about matters of our salvation; he likely wanted to help disciple the church. However, when he learned that some ungodly false teachers were in the church, he had to change gears and write to them to defend the faith instead.

Jude then spends the following fifteen verses talking about the dangers of false teaching—how these false teachers weren’t the first and just like all the ones who came before, they would end up in destruction. Why was he so concerned then? He tells us why near the end of the letter. In verses 20–21, he gives the first reason: he was concerned for the well-being of the believers in the church. They needed to defend the faith to build each other up and stay safe. Then, in verses 22–23, he gives the other reason: he was concerned for those who were being led astray. The

church needed to defend the faith to rescue others from being led astray. In other words, Jude wasn't worried about the church losing—again, he knew the false teachers had already lost—but was instead worried about the church not advancing. People needed to hear the truth of the faith, not the slanderous lies of the false teachers. They needed to be guided to life, not death. The gospel needed to be preached so that even more could hear and be saved.

When we defend the faith, we aren't defending our castle under siege; we are attacking the enemy's castle! Apologetics is about saving lives; instead of trying to destroy all within it, we are attempting to rescue them and bring them to the everlasting shelter of our castle. To defend the faith is to proclaim the faith. And to proclaim the faith is to lead sinners to repent and trust in Jesus as their Lord and Savior.

WEEK ONE

Memory Verse

I passed on to you what was most important and what had also been passed on to me. Christ died for our sins, just as the Scriptures said.
— 1 Corinthians 15:3

Prayer

Thank God for the simplicity and power of the one true, unchanging gospel.

WEEK TWO

Memory Verse

For a time is coming when people will no longer listen to sound and wholesome teaching. They will follow their own desires and will look for teachers who will tell them whatever their itching

ears want to hear. They will reject the truth and chase after myths.
— 2 Timothy 4:3–4

Prayer

Ask God to protect you from wanting your ears tickled and turning from the truth, even if it is only slightly.

WEEK THREE

Memory Verse

Don't let anyone capture you with empty philosophies and high-sounding nonsense that come from human thinking and from the spiritual powers of this world, rather than from Christ.
— Colossians 2:8

Prayer

Ask God to protect your mind and heart so that you can be in the right position to defend the faith when needed.

WEEK FOUR

Memory Verse

Dear friends, I had been eagerly planning to write to you about the salvation we all share. But now I find that I must write about something else, urging you to defend the faith

that God has entrusted once for all time to his holy people. — Jude v. 3

Prayer

Thank God for the Holy Spirit within you who will help you defend the faith.



Reflection Questions

01 In what ways have you seen the Christian faith under attack?

02 How can you recognize a false teacher?

03 What false teachers or opponents of the gospel do you need to pray for?

The Hope We Offer

What hope do we have to offer the world?

As followers of Jesus, we have the sure and lasting hope that Jesus is returning one day to right all wrongs, send sin, death, and Satan to their final end, and complete the salvation of all who have trusted Him as Lord and Savior.



Definition

Hope: In the Bible, *hope* is when we can know something for sure. It's knowing that God will do what He has said. Hope is the belief that good is coming.

Bible Story

¹ Faith shows the reality of what we hope for; it is the evidence of things we cannot see.

² Through their faith, the people in days of old earned a good reputation.

³ By faith we understand that the entire universe was formed at God's command, that what we now see did not come from anything that can be seen.

— Hebrews 11:1–3

Discussion Questions

01 What do these verses tell us about God, Jesus, or the Holy Spirit?

02 What does this tell us about ourselves or other people?

03 Based on these verses and truths, what should I stop doing, start doing, or keep doing?

Devotion

Was there ever a time when you really, really wanted something for Christmas? Perhaps it was a gaming system, expensive clothing, a phone, or maybe even a car. You might have daydreamed about what it would be like to wake up on Christmas morning, see a wrapped gift under the tree (or in the driveway), and then open it to see it was exactly what you wanted. That picture of hope is what carried you through the Christmas season. When Christmas came, did you get it? Was your hope realized, or was it lost on December 25?

When we think of *hope*, this is usually what we think of: us really wanting something but not knowing if we will get it. We hope for gifts like this. We hope that school is cancelled because of the snow. We hope no one at work calls out sick so we don't have to go in. We hope we get into a good college or get a good job after high school. We hope for all these things and many more without knowing if it will happen. It might. It might not. We simply don't know until it happens.

Because we are so used to this sort of hope, it's easy to carry that definition into the word *hope* when we see it in the Bible. But that is far from what the Bible means by *hope*. Instead, when the Bible speaks of hope, it means a confident expectation of what *will* happen. Biblical hope is a hope of certainty. That's what we see in Hebrews 11 when the writer says that faith shows the "reality," not the possibility, of what we hope for. We have evidence of this hope—even if it is unseen.

So, what hope do we have for sure? What can we be certain of? Our hope is that our salvation is sure and that one day Jesus will return. Jesus returning and making all things right is not a possibility. It's not even a probability. It's a certainty. And when Jesus returns, He will put a permanent end to sin, death, pain, suffering, and all the other brokenness of the present world as we know it. Furthermore, He will complete our salvation—we will finally experience perfect, holy living in full.

This is our hope as followers of Jesus, but this is not a hope we keep to ourselves. Rather, we are to be at work sharing this hope with the world, including the evidence for it that the writer of Hebrews wrote of. We point to the dependability of Scripture. We point to the empty grave. We point to the resurrection appearances. We point to the transformed lives of believers. We point to what Jesus has done for us! We point to every strand of evidence that weaves together to form the most beautiful, glorious tapestry of hope that Christ has given us.

WEEK ONE

Memory Verse

All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is by his great mercy that we have been born again, because God raised Jesus Christ from the dead. Now we live with great expectation. — 1 Peter 1:3

Prayer

Thank God for the ample evidence we have for our hope, namely, Christ risen.

WEEK TWO

Memory Verse

I pray that your hearts will be flooded with light so that you can understand the confident hope he has given to those he called—his holy people who are his rich and glorious inheritance. — Ephesians 1:18

Prayer

Ask God to help you hold on to our hope with growing understanding and confidence.

WEEK THREE

Memory Verse

Faith shows the reality of what we hope for; it is the evidence of things we cannot see. — Hebrews 11:1

Prayer

Thank God that our hope is not based on what we can see, but the reality of what we know.

WEEK FOUR

Memory Verse

I pray that God, the source of hope, will fill you completely with joy and peace because you trust in him. Then you will overflow with confident hope through the power of the Holy Spirit. — Romans 15:13

Prayer

Ask God to fill you not only with hope, but with joy and peace that come from that hope.



Next Steps

Take some time and record all the reasons for our hope in Jesus' return that you can think of. What reasons mean the most to you? Which do you have questions about? How persuasive do you find all these reasons put together? If the last answer is less than 100 percent, remember that faith plays a role in this, too. We have plenty of evidence for our hope, but we must remember that God hasn't given us absolute proof for a reason. He wants us to have faith, but He is kind enough not to require us to have blind faith. We see evidence all around us when we really look.

Notes:

The Goal Of Apologetics

What is the goal of apologetics?

The goal of apologetics is to present evidence for the gospel with the hope of leading a person to begin a saving relationship with Jesus Christ. Apologetics is not about arguing, debating, or winning; rather, it is about seeing individuals changed by Jesus Christ.

Bible Story

¹⁹ Even though I am a free man with no master, I have become a slave to all people to bring many to Christ.

²⁰ When I was with the Jews, I lived like a Jew to bring the Jews to Christ. When I was with those who follow the Jewish law, I too lived under that law. Even though I am not subject to the law, I did this so I could bring to Christ those who are under the law.

²¹ When I am with the Gentiles who do not follow the Jewish law, I too live apart from that law so I can bring them to Christ. But I do not ignore the law of God; I obey the law of Christ.

²² When I am with those who are weak, I share their weakness, for I want to bring the weak to Christ. Yes, I try to find common ground with everyone, doing everything I can to save some.

²³ I do everything to spread the Good News and share in its blessings.

²⁴ Don't you realize that in a race everyone runs, but only one person gets the prize? So run to win!

²⁵ All athletes are disciplined in their training. They do it to win a prize that will fade away, but we do it for an eternal prize.

²⁶ So I run with purpose in every step. I am not just shadowboxing.

— 1 Corinthians 9:19–26

Discussion Questions

01 What do these verses tell us about God, Jesus, or the Holy Spirit?

02 What does this tell us about ourselves or other people?

03 Based on these verses and truths, what should I stop doing, start doing, or keep doing?

Devotion

There's a saying that's been around for quite a while: "People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care." That maxim is certainly true when it comes to apologetics. Engaging in apologetics isn't about flexing our knowledge or winning a debate. It's not an opportunity for us to show off how much we have learned from our studies or how convincing we can be in logic and rhetoric. We can use impeccable logic and share solid facts, but if we do all this without genuinely caring for the person, we will miss it. The goal in apologetics isn't about us; it's about *them*. The goal and joy of apologetics is when God uses us to help guide someone from darkness to the light of Christ. Apologetics isn't just about tackling doubts; it's about opening hearts to the life-changing message of Jesus.

Rather than aiming apologetics to show off or to win arguments, take a cue from what Paul mentions in 1 Corinthians 9:19–26. There are many amazing apologists today, but Paul was arguably the greatest of all time. But for Paul, apologetics wasn't about showcasing how smart he was. Instead, he focused on serving others

and helping them find their way to Christ. Instead of sticking to one method, Paul knew how to adapt his approach to connect with different groups and draw them closer to faith in Jesus. Paul had a huge amount of knowledge, but it wasn't his focus or his number one tool. His first focus was communicating love to those he encountered. We should do the same. People are rarely transformed by pure information—it's God's love that truly changes hearts and opens minds.

Engaging in apologetics like this isn't always a walk in the park, but we can follow Paul's lead. He stood up for his beliefs while always considering the other person's perspective. In other words, he engaged in two-way conversations, rather than offering one-person monologues. The same should be true for us. When we communicate the gospel with others, listening to their perspectives and needs is important. We don't engage in apologetics with coldness or rigidity. Rather, we should be empathetic and warm, not because we have it in our personality, but because of the gift of salvation that we carry. Jesus cared enough for

us that He died in our place. When you hold the ultimate treasure, carry it with the love it deserves! It's all about showing people that we genuinely care, which is at the core of what Jesus taught.

Apologetics isn't about a battle of smarts; it's a tool to lead others to a transformative connection with Jesus. Embrace the opportunity to share Christ's love, knowing God is using you to guide people to lives of gospel transformation.

WEEK ONE



Memory Verse

"And you will know the truth,
and the truth will set you free."
— John 8:32

Prayer

Thank God for the message of
freedom He has given you to share
with others.

WEEK TWO



Memory Verse

Then we will no longer be immature
like children. We won't be tossed
and blown about by every wind
of new teaching. We will not be
influenced when people try to trick
us with lies so clever they sound
like the truth. — Ephesians 4:14

Prayer

Ask God to continue growing you
in your faith so that you are better
able to help others do the same.

WEEK THREE



Memory Verse

I do everything to spread the Good
News and share in its blessings.
— 1 Corinthians 9:23

Prayer

Thank God that the gospel we
defend and proclaim is good news.

WEEK FOUR



Memory Verse

And you must show mercy to
those whose faith is wavering.
Rescue others by snatching them
from the flames of judgment.
Show mercy to still others, but do
so with great caution, hating the
sins that contaminate their lives.
— Jude vv. 22–23

Prayer

Ask God to give you a tender,
loving heart for others when
engaged in apologetics.



Reflection Questions

- 01** What are some ways you can engage with others in a two-way conversation about apologetics rather than deliver a monologue?

- 02** How deeply and truly do you care for others who you engage in apologetics with?

- 03** How can you keep the goal of apologetics—not winning a debate but winning someone to Jesus—first and foremost?

The Attitude of the Apologist

What attitude should I have as I defend my faith?

When defending your faith, you should express love, humility, and compassion as you desire to bring someone to faith in Christ. Remembering this when engaging in apologetic discussions with another individual is essential.

Bible Story

¹⁶ While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was deeply troubled by all the idols he saw everywhere in the city. ¹⁷ He went to the synagogue to reason with the Jews and the God-fearing Gentiles, and he spoke daily in the public square to all who happened to be there.

¹⁸ He also had a debate with some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers. When he told them about Jesus and his resurrection, they said, "What's this babbler trying to say with these strange ideas he's picked up?" Others said, "He seems to be preaching about some foreign gods."

¹⁹ Then they took him to the high council of the city. "Come and tell us about this new teaching," they said. ²⁰ "You are saying some rather strange things, and we want to know what it's all about." ²¹ (It should be explained that all the Athenians as well as the foreigners in Athens seemed to spend all their time discussing the latest ideas.)

²² So Paul, standing before the council, addressed them as follows: "Men of Athens, I notice that you are very religious in every way, ²³ for as I was walking along I saw your many shrines. And one of your altars had this inscription on

it: 'To an Unknown God.' This God, whom you worship without knowing, is the one I'm telling you about.

²⁴ "He is the God who made the world and everything in it. Since he is Lord of heaven and earth, he doesn't live in man-made temples, ²⁵ and human hands can't serve his needs—for he has no needs. He himself gives life and breath to everything, and he satisfies every need. ²⁶ From one man he created all the nations throughout the whole earth. He decided beforehand when they should rise and fall, and he determined their boundaries.

²⁷ "His purpose was for the nations to seek after God and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him—though he is not far from any one of us. ²⁸ For in him we live and move and exist. As some of your own poets have said, 'We are his offspring.' ²⁹ And since this is true, we shouldn't think of God as an idol designed by craftsmen from gold or silver or stone.

³⁰ "God overlooked people's ignorance about these things in earlier times, but now he commands everyone everywhere to repent of their sins and turn to him. ³¹ For he has set a day for judging the world with justice by the man he has appointed, and he proved to everyone who this is by raising him from the dead."

³² When they heard Paul speak about the resurrection of the dead, some laughed in contempt, but others said, "We want to hear more about this later." ³³ That ended Paul's discussion with them, ³⁴ but some joined him and became believers. Among them were Dionysius, a member of the council, a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

— Acts 17:16–34

Discussion Questions

01 What do these verses tell us about God, Jesus, or the Holy Spirit?

02 What does this tell us about ourselves or other people?

03 Based on these verses and truths, what should I stop doing, start doing, or keep doing?

Devotion

It's important to understand this from the start: apologetics is all about love! Have you ever heard the expression, "You'll catch more flies with honey than vinegar?" That's quite true with apologetics. Being mean or unpleasant is like being full of vinegar; you will push people away by acting sour or bitter. Meanwhile, being kind to others to gain their attention or persuade them to consider the gospel is like sweet honey. You will often win over people more easily by being polite and kind. And that's the goal of apologetics. When we defend our faith, we do so to show people the amazing truth God has shown us. It isn't about winning an argument; it's about helping transform hearts. We must focus on love for a lost world. God desires that no one perish and spend eternity apart from Him; it should be our motivation to defend our faith. As followers of Jesus, it's our privilege to work with God to save others from a very real place called hell.

Unfortunately, modern apologetics often seems to be about something very different. Apologists (the ones sharing their faith) can often appear to be centered on themselves, gaining notoriety, clicks, likes, or

clout for their efforts instead of seeing people transformed by the gospel. Social media and YouTube are filled with videos of people arguing with others on the street or at college campuses. Those in these videos don't often display love, and they rarely lead someone to Jesus. Many times, they merely feed the apologist's pride and push people away from Jesus.

Thankfully, we have a better example: Paul's approach in Athens, Greece, as described in Acts 17. Paul's journey starts in verse 16, where he is very concerned about all the idols he sees in the city. So, Paul seized the opportunity to speak with the leadership council there; he used this opportunity to compliment them, not to attack them for idol worship. Verses 22–23 say:

"So Paul, standing before the council, addressed them as follows: 'Men of Athens, I notice that you are very religious in every way. For as I was walking along, I saw your many shrines, and one of your altars had this inscription on it: 'To an Unknown God.' This God, whom you worship without knowing, is the one I'm telling you about.'"

Paul's approach was astounding and worthwhile to study. He didn't begin with an attack or a challenge; instead, he offered an opportunity to build a bridge with them. He then took something they had already shown interest in, "the unknown god," and used that connection to make his case. Paul's love and bridge-building resulted in some Athenians becoming believers and others wanting to hear more.

Christians are better than they are? Or do you humbly and lovingly share with them the transformational power of the gospel, knowing that Jesus saved your life? Even when we passionately share the truth, we must do so with love and genuine care for the person. Anything less would be less than what our Savior did for us.

So, how about you? When you encounter a non-believer, how do you approach them? Do you have an attitude of pride, believing that

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Challenging Thought

We should never approach non-believers with judgment or anger. Why do you think it's so easy to do this, though, and engage in apologetics out of anger, pride, and judgment?

WEEK ONE



Memory Verse

And do everything with love.
— 1 Corinthians 16:14

Prayer

Ask God to place love for Him and others as the driving force behind your apologetics.

WEEK TWO



Memory Verse

Devote yourselves to prayer with an alert mind and a thankful heart. Pray for us, too, that God will give us many opportunities to speak about his mysterious plan concerning Christ. That is why I am here in chains. — Colossians 4:2–3

Prayer

Ask God to help you engage in apologetics with an attitude of prayer that is fully dependent on Him.

WEEK THREE



Memory Verse

For I am not ashamed of this Good News about Christ. It is the power of God at work, saving everyone who believes—the Jew first and also the Gentile. — Romans 1:16

Prayer

Thank God for the beauty and power of the gospel that we defend.

WEEK FOUR



Memory Verse

In the same way, there is more joy in heaven over one lost sinner who repents and returns to God than over ninety-nine others who are righteous and haven't strayed away! — Luke 15:7

Prayer

Ask God to work through you so that you might experience the great joy in seeing others trust in Jesus.

The Fruit of Apologetics

What is the fruit, or result, of apologetics?

The fruit of apologetics is change brought about by the Holy Spirit. We cannot argue someone into God's kingdom, but as we faithfully uphold the truths of Christianity, we can be sure that God will work in the hearts of those who share and the hearts of those who hear.

Bible Story

¹ While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul traveled through the interior regions until he reached Ephesus, on the coast, where he found several believers. ² "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" he asked them.

"No," they replied, "we haven't even heard that there is a Holy Spirit."

³ "Then what baptism did you experience?" he asked.

And they replied, "The baptism of John."

⁴ Paul said, "John's baptism called for repentance from sin. But John himself told the people to believe in the one who would come later, meaning Jesus."

⁵ As soon as they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ⁶ Then when Paul laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in other tongues and prophesied. ⁷ There were about twelve men in all.

⁸ Then Paul went to the synagogue and preached boldly for the next three months, arguing persuasively about the Kingdom of God. ⁹ But some became stubborn, rejecting his message and publicly speaking against the Way. So Paul left the synagogue and took the believers with him. Then he held

daily discussions at the lecture hall of Tyrannus.¹⁰ This went on for the next two years, so that people throughout the province of Asia—both Jews and Greeks—heard the word of the Lord.

— Acts 19:1–10

Discussion Questions

01 What do these verses tell us about God, Jesus, or the Holy Spirit?

02 What does this tell us about ourselves or other people?

03 Based on these verses and truths, what should I stop doing, start doing, or keep doing?

Devotion

Have you ever heard of a fad? A fad is a viral moment in a culture when a product quickly becomes very popular, sometimes almost overnight. The result is that everyone hears about the product, and many people buy or use the product. In the past few years, think about fidget spinners, NFTs, Wordle, and the Metaverse; these were all fads. Whatever the fad is, it transcends that moment and leaves a mark on people's memories, often for years and years to come. A fad never leaves the culture the same as before it arrived; it leaves behind change.

Acts 19 is a mind-blowing, mic-drop chapter in Scripture. A truly unbelievable amount of drama happens in a very short amount of time. When Paul arrived in Ephesus, he followed his usual custom of visiting the synagogue and preaching about Jesus to the Jews. This lasted a few weeks, but then Paul and the new believers were banished. This was typical of almost all of Paul's missionary journeys: preach in the synagogue, get expelled, and set up shop elsewhere. In Acts 19, after

being expelled, Paul set up in the lecture hall of Tyrannus. Verse 10 describes Paul's time there: "This went on for the next two years so that people throughout the province of Asia—both Jews and Greeks—heard the word of the Lord."

This is where *change* began; everything God did in this city and the region after this was a result of apologetics, with Paul teaching and equipping students to share and defend their faith. Paul discussed the things of Jesus daily at this school, and because of his time teaching and reasoning there, all the Jews and Greeks in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord. How did this happen? Well, individuals came to the school, were taught by Paul, and then shared what they learned from him in their local communities. So, in two years, the fruit of apologetics was seen throughout Asia.

It gets even better. Later, a revival occurred in the city of Ephesus, and people from all over the city burned millions of dollars of demonic and occult materials. In verses 26 and 27, a concerned silversmith said:

“But as you have seen and heard, this man Paul has persuaded many people that handmade gods aren’t really gods at all. And he’s done this not only here in Ephesus but throughout the entire province! Of course, I’m not just talking about the loss of public respect for our business. I’m also concerned that the temple of the great goddess Artemis will lose its influence and that Artemis—this magnificent goddess worshiped throughout the province of Asia and all around the world—will be robbed of her great prestige!”

Because of God working through the truth that Paul shared, people defended the Christian faith. They grew in their relationship with Jesus, and others changed their minds about the gods they served. The fruit of apologetics in Acts 19 was change: the end of pagan worship and the transformation of a city and region. Don’t believe that God can’t do the same through you! As you defend your faith with love and hard work, people will notice how you live for God. It will begin to change them, even in small ways. Your obedience and boldness in love allow God to begin to work in their lives—and it helps your faith to grow.

WEEK ONE**Memory Verse**

This went on for the next two years, so that people throughout the province of Asia—both Jews and Greeks—heard the word of the Lord. —Acts 19:10

Prayer

Ask God to draw all people to Himself through the apologetics and evangelism of the church.

WEEK TWO**Memory Verse**

Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect. — Romans 12:2

Prayer

Thank God for the transformation we experience as followers of Jesus and ask Him to use you to help others experience the same.

WEEK THREE**Memory Verse**

And I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns. — Philippians 1:6

Prayer

Ask that God use your apologetics to begin the work of salvation in others.

WEEK FOUR**Memory Verse**

"Come now, let's settle this," says the Lord. "Though your sins are like scarlet, I will make them as white as snow. Though they are red like crimson, I will make them as white as wool." — Isaiah 1:18

Prayer

Thank God for His promise to forgive all the sins of anyone who trusts in Jesus, even the harshest opponent of Jesus right now.



Challenging Thought

Our faith grows as we obey God's instructions and watch Him work. Often, we are the ones changed by our obedience. In what area of your life do you need to step out in faith and obey God?

Notes:

Before We Defend the Faith

How can I prepare to defend my faith?

Defending the faith doesn't start with our knowledge of the essential doctrines of Christianity. It begins with our life in Christ. Make it your aim to know Christ deeply, to love Him with all your being, and allow Him to guide and empower you in your opportunities to share and defend the faith.

Bible Story

¹ While Peter and John were speaking to the people, they were confronted by the priests, the captain of the Temple guard, and some of the Sadducees.

² These leaders were very disturbed that Peter and John were teaching the people that through Jesus there is a resurrection of the dead. ³ They arrested them and, since it was already evening, put them in jail until morning. ⁴ But many of the people who heard their message believed it, so the number of believers now totaled about 5,000.

⁵ The next day the council of all the rulers and elders and teachers of religious law met in Jerusalem. ⁶ Annas the high priest was there, along with Caiaphas, John, Alexander, and other relatives of the high priest. ⁷ They brought in the two disciples and demanded, "By what power, or in whose name, have you done this?"

⁸ Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers and elders of our people, ⁹ are we being questioned today because we've done a good deed for a crippled man? Do you want to know how he was healed? ¹⁰ Let me clearly state to all of you and to all the people of Israel that he was healed by the powerful name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, the man you crucified

but whom God raised from the dead. ¹¹ For Jesus is the one referred to in the Scriptures, where it says,

‘The stone that you builders rejected
has now become the cornerstone.’

¹² There is salvation in no one else! God has given no other name under heaven by which we must be saved.”

¹³ The members of the council were amazed when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, for they could see that they were ordinary men with no special training in the Scriptures. They also recognized them as men who had been with Jesus. ¹⁴ But since they could see the man who had been healed standing right there among them, there was nothing the council could say. ¹⁵ So they ordered Peter and John out of the council chamber and conferred among themselves.

¹⁶ “What should we do with these men?” they asked each other. “We can’t deny that they have performed a miraculous sign, and everybody in Jerusalem knows about it. ¹⁷ But to keep them from spreading their propaganda any further, we must warn them not to speak to anyone in Jesus’ name again.” ¹⁸ So they called the apostles back in and commanded them never again to speak or teach in the name of Jesus.

¹⁹ But Peter and John replied, “Do you think God wants us to obey you rather than him? ²⁰ We cannot stop telling about everything we have seen and heard.”

²¹ The council then threatened them further, but they finally let them go because they didn’t know how to punish them without starting a riot. For everyone was praising God ²² for this miraculous sign—the healing of a man who had been lame for more than forty years.

— Acts 4:1–22

Discussion Questions

01 What do these verses tell us about God, Jesus, or the Holy Spirit?

02 What does this tell us about ourselves or other people?

03 Based on these verses and truths, what should I stop doing, start doing, or keep doing?

Devotion

For many, it's easy to think that to be successful apologists, we need to do more and more—always reading books, watching videos, and gaining knowledge to defend our faith. It's certainly true that learning goes a long way in being effective in apologetics. Having a working knowledge of the classic defenses for the existence of God, the basic supports for the reliability of Scripture, and the popular arguments against Christianity can greatly help anyone's apologetic efforts. However, Acts 4 tells about the most important part of apologetics. In this powerful true story, Peter and John face the Jewish religious leaders called the Sanhedrin. These leaders had arrested the two apostles for talking about Jesus at a time when many people were joining the early church. The next day, Peter bravely stood before the Sanhedrin to explain their actions and took the chance to share the message of Jesus with them. The leaders were amazed by Peter and John's boldness, noting that they were regular guys without special religious training. But what really stood out to the leaders was the boldness Peter and John displayed. By their words,

actions, and courage, they could recognize them as men who had spent time with Jesus.

This story teaches us an important lesson about the source of true strength and wisdom. It shows us that having a strong relationship with Jesus is more powerful than any amount of knowledge or training we might acquire. It's important to spend time learning information and skills that we can use in apologetics, but above all, we should never forget to focus on spending time with Jesus.

In your everyday life, make a conscious effort to spend more time with Jesus through prayer, reading the Bible, and quiet reflection. Allow His teachings and His love to influence your thoughts and actions—and your studies. By prioritizing your relationship with Jesus, you can experience His transformational power and confidently share your faith with others. The story of Peter and John shows us the incredible result of the Holy Spirit working in our lives when we focus on spending time with Jesus. We can be successful

in apologetics by doing the latter and not the former, but we will not succeed if we do the former and not the latter.

So, instead of only trying to learn more and more, take a moment to reflect on the power of being in the presence of Jesus. Prioritize your

relationship with Him above all else.

That doesn't mean you shouldn't learn; it does mean that learning shouldn't be your main focus. By deepening your connection and relationship with Jesus, you can find the strength, wisdom, and courage you need to face any challenge that comes your way.



Next Steps

Consider how much time you spend learning about apologetics, either by reading and studying or watching videos of popular apologists. Is that more or less than the time you spend with Jesus? If it's more, consider how you can continue studying apologetics while spending more time with Jesus than on those efforts.

WEEK ONE

Memory Verse

The members of the council were amazed when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, for they could see that they were ordinary men with no special training in the Scriptures. They also

recognized them as men who had been with Jesus. — Acts 4:13

Prayer

Thank God for preparing us through the Holy Spirit to share His truth with others.

WEEK TWO

Memory Verse

Instead, you must worship Christ as Lord of your life. And if someone asks about your hope as a believer, always be ready to explain it. But do this in a gentle and respectful way. Keep your conscience clear. Then if people speak against

you, they will be ashamed when they see what a good life you live because you belong to Christ.
— 1 Peter 3:15–16

Prayer

Ask God to help you respectfully and lovingly respond to questions about your faith.

WEEK THREE

Memory Verse

He refuted the Jews with powerful arguments in public debate. Using the Scriptures, he explained to them that Jesus was the Messiah.
— Acts 18:28

Prayer

Thank God for providing the power to share the gospel with others.

WEEK FOUR

Memory Verse

All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. God uses

it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.
— 2 Timothy 3:16–17

Prayer

Pray for boldness as you share the goodness of scripture with others.

The Truths and Practices We Need to Know

What do I need to know to be an apologist?

With our relationship to Christ serving as the foundation of our defense of the faith, effective apologetics requires us to have a grasp of the essential truths of Christianity, such as the nature of God, the reliability of Scripture, and the virgin birth. We must also learn to observe people and culture in order to anticipate and respond to their questions. We should learn about other religions and worldviews. We need to become good listeners. Most importantly, because apologetics is not about winning arguments but winning people, we need to stay humble.

Bible Story

¹² Some of you are saying, “I am a follower of Paul.” Others are saying, “I follow Apollos,” or “I follow Peter,” or “I follow only Christ.”

¹³ Has Christ been divided into factions? Was I, Paul, crucified for you? Were any of you baptized in the name of Paul? Of course not! ¹⁴ I thank God that I did not baptize any of you except Crispus and Gaius, ¹⁵ for now no one can say they were baptized in my name. ¹⁶ (Oh yes, I also baptized the household of Stephanas, but I don’t remember baptizing anyone else.) ¹⁷ For Christ didn’t send me to baptize, but to preach the Good News—and not with clever speech, for fear that the cross of Christ would lose its power.

¹⁸ The message of the cross is foolish to those who are headed for destruction! But we who are being saved know it is the very power of God.

¹⁹ As the Scriptures say,

“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise
and discard the intelligence of the intelligent.”

²⁰ So where does this leave the philosophers, the scholars, and the world’s brilliant debaters? God has made the wisdom of this world look foolish. ²¹ Since God in his wisdom saw to it that the world would never know him through human wisdom, he has used our foolish preaching to save those who believe. ²² It is foolish to the Jews, who ask for signs from heaven. And it is foolish to the Greeks, who seek human wisdom. ²³ So when we preach that Christ was crucified, the Jews are offended and the Gentiles say it’s all nonsense.

²⁴ But to those called by God to salvation, both Jews and Gentiles, Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵ This foolish plan of God is wiser than the wisest of human plans, and God’s weakness is stronger than the greatest of human strength.

²⁶ Remember, dear brothers and sisters, that few of you were wise in the world’s eyes or powerful or wealthy when God called you. ²⁷ Instead, God chose things the world considers foolish in order to shame those who think they are wise. And he chose things that are powerless to shame those who are powerful. ²⁸ God chose things despised by the world, things counted as nothing at all, and used them to bring to nothing what the world considers important. ²⁹ As a result, no one can ever boast in the presence of God.

³⁰ God has united you with Christ Jesus. For our benefit God made him to be wisdom itself. Christ made us right with God; he made us pure and holy, and he freed us from sin. ³¹ Therefore, as the Scriptures say, “If you want to boast, boast only about the Lord.”

— 1 Corinthians 1:12–31

Discussion Questions

01 What do these verses tell us about God, Jesus, or the Holy Spirit?

02 What does this tell us about ourselves or other people?

03 Based on these verses and truths, what should I stop doing, start doing, or keep doing?

Devotion

There are some great tips to help you defend your faith, but as you prepare for apologetics, don't put the cart before the horse. Before you dip your toes into the waters of information that could help you, start with the transformation that will help you: having a close relationship with Jesus. If you aren't walking with Jesus, studying His word, and putting Him first, it will be quite difficult for you to defend your faith. As the saying goes, "you can't pass along what you don't have." So, if you aren't doing that right now, start today and put your faith first.

You can never move past this focus on your own relationship with Christ, but you can surely add to it. As you engage in more direct preparation for apologetics, start with these tips:

1. Know Key Doctrines

As you engage in apologetics, it's crucial to have a firm grasp of the foundational truths of Christianity. This includes understanding the nature of God as Triune, the person and work of Jesus Christ, salvation by grace through faith, the authority and reliability of Scripture, and the hope of

resurrection. These doctrines aren't merely theological concepts—they're the heart of what you're defending. When you're confident in the truth of the gospel, it strengthens your faith and equips you to answer questions clearly. The more rooted you are in biblical truth, the more natural and Spirit-led your conversations will become.

2. Anticipate Questions

An informed apologist studies the common questions people ask and the challenges people make to Christianity. These might include concerns about evil and suffering, doubts about miracles or the resurrection, claims that all religions lead to the same God, or critiques that the Bible is outdated or man-made. Understanding these objections—and being prepared to discuss them with truth, clarity, and grace—makes your defense more relevant and helpful. It's not about having a script to use, but rather it's about thoughtfully addressing real issues that matter to the people you encounter.

3. Study Other Perspectives

Engaging effectively means knowing not just what you believe, but also understanding what others believe. Take time to study common world religions like Islam, Hinduism, or Mormonism. Check out other philosophies like atheism, universalism, or relativism. This helps you go into conversations with empathy and accuracy rather than assumptions. When someone sees that you understand their beliefs, they're more likely to listen to yours. It also allows you to find meaningful connections between their worldview and the gospel, making your conversations even more fruitful.

4. Listen

Listening is one of the most powerful tools in apologetics. People don't just want answers; they want to be heard. By truly listening, you show that you value the other person, not just the argument. Active listening helps you grasp the heart behind someone's questions, often revealing pain, doubt, or past hurt. This understanding can shape how you respond with truth and compassion. To engage in apologetics the right

way means it's a dialogue, not a monologue. Listening with patience and humility can open doors that rehearsed answers could never open.

5. Be Humble

The proper attitude in apologetics is humility. Getting caught up in winning a debate is easy, but both parties truly lose. Rather, the goal of apologetics is to represent Christ and point others to Him, not ourselves. A humble heart recognizes that we don't have all the answers but trusts that God does. That means we pray, and ask the Holy Spirit for wisdom, compassion, and guidance in our conversations. Pray for the people you engage with, both before and after discussions. To see the fruit in apologetics, we need God to do a spiritual work, and the most powerful defense of the faith comes from a dependence on God and a genuine love for others.

Becoming well-versed in apologetics is like training in a skilled dance: you have to practice to become fluid at answering tough questions about your faith. However, above all else, the most important aspect of being ready for any challenge is

growing in knowing Jesus personally. It's important to figure out why you believe what you believe. What has Jesus done in your life, how has He saved you, and what does He mean to you? Knowing Jesus closely and having a strong relationship with Him is the key to talking to others about Him with passion and clarity. When you truly understand what He taught and did for us, your faith strengthens, and you can confidently talk to others about Him.

WEEK ONE**Memory Verse**

You have heard me teach things that have been confirmed by many reliable witnesses. Now teach these truths to other trustworthy people who will be able to pass them on to others. — 2 Timothy 2:2

Prayer

Thank God for putting other believers in your life to teach you the core doctrines of our faith.

WEEK TWO**Memory Verse**

The message of the cross is foolish to those who are headed for destruction! But we who are being saved know it is the very power of God. — 1 Corinthians 1:18

Prayer

Thank God for the “foolishness” of the gospel that has the power to save lives.

WEEK THREE**Memory Verse**

Instead, God chose things the world considers foolish in order to shame those who think they are wise. And he chose things that are powerless to shame those who are powerful. — 1 Corinthians 1:27

Prayer

Ask God to help you grow in your understanding of the simple beauty of the cross.

WEEK FOUR**Memory Verse**

Jesus told him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me.” — John 14:6

Prayer

Ask God to help you point to Jesus in all your apologetics efforts.



Next Steps

Take some time to consider your personal relationship with Jesus. Are you growing in it? Are you loving Jesus more deeply?

What steps can you take to do this more?

Then, choose one area to dive into to prepare for apologetics. Study a key doctrine, research a few common questions asked about the Christian faith and consider how you might respond to each, or study another religion or worldview.

Notes:

The Limits of Knowledge

Do I know enough?

No, you don't know enough. We will never know all there is to know about our faith or other religions. However, we know the only one who "knows enough," which is Jesus Christ. Point people to Him. Not only does He know all, He has sent the Holy Spirit to live in you, empower you, and guide you as you testify and do apologetics for him.

Bible Story

⁵ Jesus sent out the twelve apostles with these instructions: "Don't go to the Gentiles or the Samaritans, ⁶ but only to the people of Israel—God's lost sheep. ⁷ Go and announce to them that the Kingdom of Heaven is near. ⁸ Heal the sick, raise the dead, cure those with leprosy, and cast out demons. Give as freely as you have received!

⁹ "Don't take any money in your money belts—no gold, silver, or even copper coins. ¹⁰ Don't carry a traveler's bag with a change of clothes and sandals or even a walking stick. Don't hesitate to accept hospitality, because those who work deserve to be fed.

¹¹ "Whenever you enter a city or village, search for a worthy person and stay in his home until you leave town. ¹² When you enter the home, give it your blessing. ¹³ If it turns out to be a worthy home, let your blessing stand; if it is not, take back the blessing. ¹⁴ If any household or town refuses to welcome you or listen to your message, shake its dust from your feet as you leave. ¹⁵ I tell you the truth, the wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorrah will be better off than such a town on the judgment day.

¹⁶ "Look, I am sending you out as sheep among wolves. So be as shrewd as snakes and harmless as doves. ¹⁷ But beware! For you will be handed over

to the courts and will be flogged with whips in the synagogues. ¹⁸ You will stand trial before governors and kings because you are my followers. But this will be your opportunity to tell the rulers and other unbelievers about me.

¹⁹ When you are arrested, don't worry about how to respond or what to say. God will give you the right words at the right time. ²⁰ For it is not you who will be speaking—it will be the Spirit of your Father speaking through you."

— Matthew 10:5–20

Discussion Questions

01 What do these verses tell us about God, Jesus, or the Holy Spirit?

02 What does this tell us about ourselves or other people?

03 Based on these verses and truths, what should I stop doing, start doing, or keep doing?

Devotion

Imagine your friend is sick: stomach pain, pale appearance, headache, and fever. They come to you asking what you should do. You could advise them of some medicine to take, or give them some water or a bowl of soup. But, you definitely wouldn't grab a pair of gloves and a scalpel, and tell them to lie down on the table in your kitchen for surgery! You may know some things about why they are ill, and you may be able to point them in the right direction to get better. But you would know there is a limit to your knowledge about the human body. You aren't a doctor, so performing surgery isn't a wise idea. However, you know it's a sensible idea to point sick people to someone who knows how to help and cure them.

A bit of a ridiculous example, but one with a point. You can't fix every person's problems, either. You're never going to know everything about the Christian faith. You won't know how to counsel every friend who needs help. You won't have the answer to every question someone asks. You won't be able to free them from their struggles. But you do know Jesus. Our job in apologetics is to

present Christ in a way that leads other people to them.

Look at Jesus' teaching in Matthew 10. The twelve apostles, or disciples, have been spending night and day with Jesus for a while now. They have been listening to Him teach, watching Him, and noting everything He does closely. In this passage, Jesus says, "You've seen it now, go do it." He sends them out to multiply his ministry by preaching in more towns and villages. As they go out, Jesus gives them one instruction that can be helpful for today; He tells them what to announce: "The kingdom of heaven is near," basically, share the gospel. That's all He tells them to say or share. Yes, he gives them many other tips and instructions, but that is all He says about the message they are to share: just tell people the Gospel, that's it. They can't fix the people's ultimate problem, sin. But they can share with them the One who can!

How does that work for them? The ministry goes so well that they can't even get back to Jesus to give Him their report. Thousands of people follow them and want to know more

about Jesus. They come in droves just to meet with the Savior who came to rescue them. They arrive to hear Him teach, to be healed, and to experience God's power. Right after this, Jesus meets the crowds and feeds them, more than five thousand men plus the women and children. They meet the True Doctor, who can cure everything that ails us all for eternity. Thousands of people had a chance to be made healthy, all because men who didn't know enough knew to point them to Jesus.

WEEK ONE



Memory Verse

"And I have put my words in your mouth and hidden you safely in my hand. I stretched out the sky like a canopy and laid the foundations of the earth. I am the one who says to Israel, 'You are my people!'"
— Isaiah 51:16

Prayer

Ask God to give you just the right words to share with others right when you need them.

WEEK TWO



Memory Verse

Work hard so you can present yourself to God and receive his approval. Be a good worker, one who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly explains the word of truth. — 2 Timothy 2:15

Prayer

Ask God to give you the motivation and discipline to study the Bible for your own growth and so you can pass along what you learn to others.

WEEK THREE



Memory Verse

When you are arrested, don't worry about how to respond or what to say. God will give you the right words at the right time. For it is not you who will be speaking—it will be the Spirit of your Father speaking through you. — Matthew 10:19–20

Prayer

Thank God for the Holy Spirit always being with you and empowering you just as you need.

WEEK FOUR



Memory Verse

For I decided that while I was with you I would forget everything except Jesus Christ, the one who was crucified. — 1 Corinthians 2:2

Prayer

Ask God to give you confidence that because you know Jesus, you know enough to tell others about Him.



Next Steps

Make a list of truths you know about Jesus, the gospel, and the Bible. Then, make a list of things you would like to learn more about! Send your list to your group leader or talk to a pastor about your questions this month.

Notes:

The World's Questions

What questions does the world ask of Christianity?

There are many questions. One you may hear is, “Why do I need God?” To know who God is and defend the faith, one question stands out above the rest: “*Can we just be good without God?*”



Further Inspection

In Rebecca McLaughlin’s book *10 Questions Every Teen Should Ask (and Answer) about Christianity*, the author addresses common challenges students experience regarding Christianity. She explores relevant topics such as the reliability of the Bible, the relationship between science and faith, issues of diversity, and questions about sexuality and gender. Through an apologetics approach, McLaughlin provides clear answers to some of the most pressing questions students face, aiming to equip readers with a healthy understanding of Christianity. But in all the questions she addressed and that teenagers face, which is the most important in our culture today? Each is important, and we recommend you read Rebecca’s book.

Bible Story

¹² When the Gentiles sin, they will be destroyed, even though they never had God’s written law. And the Jews, who do have God’s law, will be judged by that law when they fail to obey it. ¹³ For merely listening to the law doesn’t make us right with God. It is obeying the law that makes us right in his sight. ¹⁴ Even Gentiles, who do not have God’s written law, show that they know his law when they instinctively obey it, even without having heard it. ¹⁵ They demonstrate that God’s law is written in their hearts, for their own conscience and thoughts either accuse them or tell them they are doing right. ¹⁶ And this is the message I proclaim—that the day is coming when God, through Christ Jesus, will judge everyone’s secret life.

¹⁷ You who call yourselves Jews are relying on God's law, and you boast about your special relationship with him. ¹⁸ You know what he wants; you know what is right because you have been taught his law. ¹⁹ You are convinced that you are a guide for the blind and a light for people who are lost in darkness. ²⁰ You think you can instruct the ignorant and teach children the ways of God. For you are certain that God's law gives you complete knowledge and truth.

²¹ Well then, if you teach others, why don't you teach yourself? You tell others not to steal, but do you steal? ²² You say it is wrong to commit adultery, but do you commit adultery? You condemn idolatry, but do you use items stolen from pagan temples? ²³ You are so proud of knowing the law, but you dishonor God by breaking it. ²⁴ No wonder the Scriptures say, "The Gentiles blaspheme the name of God because of you."

— Romans 2:12–24

Discussion Questions

01 What do these verses tell us about God, Jesus, or the Holy Spirit?

02 What does this tell us about ourselves or other people?

03 Based on these verses and truths, what should I stop doing, start doing, or keep doing?

MAY

Devotion

Picture yourself deep in the woods, just you and your backpack. You're trying to find your way home when you suddenly realize you're off the trail. You look behind to try and retrace your steps, but then you realize you are way off the trail. You reach into your backpack and pull out your trusty compass. You are

sure that your trusty compass will guide you, but every time you think you're heading north, the needle starts jittering left, then right, then behind! Instead of leading you in the right direction, following your compass leaves you walking in circles and feeling totally lost. What a hopeless situation!

Trekking through the woods with a broken compass is like trying to figure out right and wrong without God—a never-ending game of guessing and changing your mind based on how you feel or what everyone else is doing. When people ask if we can be “good without God,” the short answer is “no.” Without God, morality becomes like that wonky compass—shifty and all over the place. History proves that relying solely on human judgment to determine right and wrong can lead to serious mess-ups. We simply don’t do it correctly on our own.

Romans 2:15 reminds us that God’s moral law is written on our hearts, showing that deep down, we all share a sense of fairness and understanding of what is right and wrong. Through God’s word, we strengthen that sense that naturally exists inside of us. However, the more we go our own way, the more we can believe the lies of the enemy over the truth of God. By sticking to the solid truths in the Bible, we find a reliable foundation for making the right choices that reflect God’s character and lead us in the right direction.

The Bible and correct Christian belief gives the foundation for human dignity and moral truth. Christianity teaches that all people are made in the image of God, which is why every person matters. Jesus not only taught us to love others but lived it—especially loving the outcasts and the enemies. Without God, it’s hard to explain *why* we should love everyone, especially when it’s hard or inconvenient.

Like a messed-up compass in the woods spells trouble, trying to figure out morality without God leaves us lost and scratching our heads. But when we lean into Jesus’ guidance and live by God’s standard, we can walk confidently in the right direction, knowing that true goodness is found in following Him.

WEEK ONE



Memory Verse

They demonstrate that God's law is written in their hearts, for their own conscience and thoughts either accuse them or tell them they are doing right. — Romans 2:15

Prayer

Thank God for giving you a conscience, the Holy Spirit, and His Word to help you know right and wrong.

WEEK TWO



Memory Verse

Only fools say in their hearts, "There is no God." They are corrupt, and their actions are evil; not one of them does good! — Psalm 14:1

Prayer

Thank God for opening your eyes and revealing Himself to you.

WEEK THREE



Memory Verse

Do not banish me from your presence, and don't take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and make me willing to obey you. Then I will teach your ways to rebels, and they will return to you. — Psalm 51:11–13

Prayer

Thank God for the permanence of your salvation.

WEEK FOUR



Memory Verse

And I will give you a new heart, and I will put a new spirit in you. I will take out your stony, stubborn heart and give you a tender, responsive heart. — Ezekiel 36:26

Prayer

Thank God for the new, tender heart He gives all who believe in Jesus.



Reflection Questions

- 01** Have you ever faced a situation where people justified something you knew was wrong?

- 02** How does knowing that God is the source of morality help you stand firm when culture changes?

- 03** How would understanding this principle help you defend your faith inside of other cultural, hot topic issues?



Next Steps

Pick one act of goodness to do today—not to impress anyone, but simply to reflect God’s heart. Maybe it’s standing up for someone who’s left out, forgiving someone, or helping when it’s inconvenient. Then, spend a few moments thanking God for being the source of all goodness.

Christianity and Other Religions

What other religions might I encounter as I defend my faith?

Many popular religions exist, all with different beliefs and worldviews. Knowing about these religions will equip you to defend Christianity and share Biblical truth with those who uphold them.



Further Inspection

Some of the prevalent religions in the United States include:

Islam believes in one God (Allah) and follows the teachings of Muhammad.

Hinduism embraces many gods and a cycle of rebirth.

Buddhism seeks enlightenment through detachment from desire and suffering.

Secularism and Atheism reject or deny belief in any deity.

New Age and Spiritualism often blend mysticism, self-empowerment, and Eastern philosophies.

False Teachings, such as Mormonism or Jehovah's Witnesses, may use Christian language but deny the core truths of the gospel.

Bible Story

¹ In the beginning the Word already existed.

The Word was with God,
and the Word was God.

² He existed in the beginning with God.

³ God created everything through him,
and nothing was created except through him.

⁴ The Word gave life to everything that was created,
and his life brought light to everyone.

⁵ The light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness can never extinguish it.

⁶ God sent a man, John the Baptist, ⁷ to tell about the light so that everyone might believe because of his testimony. ⁸ John himself was not the light; he was simply a witness to tell about the light. ⁹ The one who is the true light, who gives light to everyone, was coming into the world.

¹⁰ He came into the very world he created, but the world didn't recognize him. ¹¹ He came to his own people, and even they rejected him. ¹² But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God. ¹³ They are reborn—not with a physical birth resulting from human passion or plan, but a birth that comes from God.

¹⁴ So the Word became human and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son.

— John 1:1–14

Discussion Questions

01 What do these verses tell us about God, Jesus, or the Holy Spirit?

02 What does this tell us about ourselves or other people?

03 Based on these verses and truths, what should I stop doing, start doing, or keep doing?

Devotion

As we examine other religions, we will explore three faiths you are most likely to encounter and what they believe about Jesus. To establish a foundation, let's consider what the Christian Church teaches about Jesus:

We believe in Jesus, the eternal, pre-existent second person of the Trinity, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, and is fully God but became fully man to save a lost world. We believe that he was crucified and, three days later, rose from the grave. He ascended into heaven and will one day return again.

As we study other religions, looking at what they say about Jesus is the best way to start. Interestingly, the three religions we will examine, Islam, Mormonism, and Jehovah's Witnesses, each believe in Jesus and have much to say about Him. However, the Jesus they believe in is very different from the Jesus of the Bible, and their beliefs about what Jesus came to do differ significantly from biblical accounts. Here is what Islam (Muslims) say about Jesus: He was the second

greatest prophet in Islam, and one cannot be a good Muslim without believing in Him. Islam denies the crucifixion and consequently rejects the resurrection. Islam denies that Jesus is God. Mormons believe that Jesus was born in heaven to physical parents in the preexistence, and that Satan is His brother as well as our brother. He became incarnate to be God for about 2000 years and is one of the three *separate* Gods of their Trinity. They do not believe faith in Jesus is how we are saved; they add other elements to faith that earn salvation. Jehovah's Witnesses do not believe that Jesus is God; He was created and did not always exist. They hold that Jesus is Michael the Archangel who became man. God created Michael, and through Michael, made everything else. They believe that Jesus died on a stake, not a cross. Jehovah's Witnesses celebrate the death of Jesus but do not acknowledge the resurrection. They say Jesus' spirit was resurrected, but His body was dissolved, which is why the tomb was empty.

Even before you wade deeply into the beliefs of these religions, they

differ from Christianity. The problem is that Jesus is crucial to everything in our faith. We cannot be saved if Jesus is not God and man. We cannot be saved if He wasn't sinless; it was the only way He could take our sin on Himself. Salvation doesn't

happen if Jesus doesn't die in our place, and we cannot have eternal life if Jesus didn't defeat death when He was resurrected. What we believe about Jesus matters; He is a great (and important) place to begin when we practice apologetics.



Definition

Incarnate: having taken on flesh; becoming human.

Jesus is God incarnate. He is eternally fully God and became fully man when He was conceived by the Holy Spirit. "So the Word became human and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son" (John 1:14).



Challenging Thought

The Christian faith is built on Jesus Christ, so what we say and believe about Him is of ultimate importance. What is the difference between believing what the other religions above say about Jesus and what Christianity and the gospel say about Him?

WEEK ONE

Memory Verse

There may be so-called gods both in heaven and on earth, and some people actually worship many gods and many lords. But for us, there is one God, the Father, by whom all things were created, and for whom we live. And there

is one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things were created, and through whom we live.

— 1 Corinthians 8:5–6

Prayer

Pray for individuals that you know who are part of another religion.

WEEK TWO

Memory Verse

But there were also false prophets in Israel, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will cleverly teach destructive heresies and even deny the Master who bought them. In this way, they

will bring sudden destruction on themselves. — 2 Peter 2:1

Prayer

Ask God to protect others from other religions' false prophets and false teachers.

WEEK THREE

Memory Verse

You must not worship the Lord your God the way the other nations worship their gods, for they perform for their gods every detestable act that the Lord hates. They even burn their sons and

daughters as sacrifices to their gods. — Deuteronomy 12:31

Prayer

Ask God to protect you and the church from incorporating any wrong way of worshiping the one true God.

WEEK FOUR

Memory Verse

I am shocked that you are turning away so soon from God, who called you to himself through the loving mercy of Christ. You are following a

different way that pretends to be the Good News. — Galatians 1:6

Prayer

Ask God to protect you and others from turning to any other religion.

Responding to Opposition

What kind of opposition to Christianity might I encounter?

We live in a world filled with many competing ideas and beliefs. That means that, as followers of Jesus, we will inevitably face some degree of opposition. No matter the source—whether in school, with friends and family, or through social media—our responsibility is to faithfully represent Christ in our words and actions.

Bible Story

¹³ Now, who will want to harm you if you are eager to do good?

¹⁴ But even if you suffer for doing what is right, God will reward you for it. So don't worry or be afraid of their threats.

¹⁵ Instead, you must worship Christ as Lord of your life. And if someone asks about your hope as a believer, always be ready to explain it.

¹⁶ But do this in a gentle and respectful way. Keep your conscience clear. Then if people speak against you, they will be ashamed when they see what a good life you live because you belong to Christ.

¹⁷ Remember, it is better to suffer for doing good, if that is what God wants, than to suffer for doing wrong!

— 1 Peter 3:13–17

Discussion Questions

01 What do these verses tell us about God, Jesus, or the Holy Spirit?

02 What does this tell us about ourselves or other people?

03 Based on these verses and truths, what should I stop doing, start doing, or keep doing?

Devotion

Imagine you are giving a presentation to your class on the importance of recycling. You have researched your facts, many studies affirm your case, and you know what you believe. What if, while you are giving this presentation, a classmate stands up and yells, "I don't agree—you are wrong!" Would you stop the presentation? Would you give up what you believed and researched because one person said you were wrong? No. You would continue with the presentation because you were prepared and you know your presentation is true.

While sharing our faith is not the same as recycling, we need to have this same posture. We want to know what we believe, be prepared, and stand firm in our faith. First Peter shows us how to be prepared and face opposition well. In verses 15–16, it says, "Instead, you must worship Christ as Lord of your life. And if someone asks about your hope as a believer, always be ready to explain it. But do this gently and respectfully. Keep your conscience clear. Then if people speak against you, they will be ashamed when they see what a good life you live because

you belong to Christ." Being prepared means knowing the true gospel of Jesus. How can we face opposition to our faith if we don't know what we believe? Spending time in the Word, going to church, and learning in a small group are all actions that prepare us in our faith for opposition. We must know and fully believe in the true gospel of Jesus to live boldly in our faith!

Next, we want to be prepared to share our faith with others. Romans 6:23 lays out the foundation of our beliefs: "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord." This shows us that we have earned death through our sins, but Jesus died to give us another way; He died so we can have a relationship with Him and be saved from the consequences of our actions. Memorize this verse and know how to articulate its meaning. This will give you confidence if opposition comes your way because you know what you believe and how to explain it to others. Peter reminds us that we must be prepared to share our faith with others, so we need to spend time preparing our position. If you need a refresher on

the gospel, reading through the book of John is a great way to get a solid grasp on Jesus' good news.

Finally, we must stand firm even in the face of opposition. While opposition can feel intimidating, we must remember we are not alone. Jesus himself faced opposition the entirety of His ministry on earth. Facing opposition does not mean your belief is wrong; it just means someone else does not understand. Jesus faced consistent opposition from the Pharisees, but that didn't lead Him to stop telling the truth about who He was and why He came! He had a posture like 1 Peter calls us to, "gentle and respectful." Yelling at someone is not how to show them the truth and love of the gospel. If we know what we believe and are prepared, we can respond calmly to the opposition or questions we face. While we might not be able to answer all the questions someone has, we can tell them we will get back to them and ask a trusted believer for help responding. If and when we get knocked down in our mission, we get back up and continue on.

We will face opposition in our faith, but we can do that well when we know what we believe, we are prepared, and we stand firm. We aren't called to hide from opposition, but gently and respectfully respond with the truth of Jesus. Breathe deep and remember: you have the unchanging truth of God's word as your guide. It is a gift to share the good news of Jesus, even when it is in the face of opposition.

WEEK ONE



Memory Verse

And everyone will hate you because you are my followers. But not a hair of your head will perish! By standing firm, you will win your souls. — Luke 21:17–19

Prayer

Thank God for His promise to protect His people.

WEEK TWO



Memory Verse

But I say, love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you! — Matthew 5:44

Prayer

Ask God to give you a genuine and deep love for those who oppose you and Jesus.

WEEK THREE



Memory Verse

Fearing people is a dangerous trap, but trusting the Lord means safety. — Proverbs 29:25

Prayer

Ask God to help you trust Him, even when others oppose you.

WEEK FOUR



Memory Verse

And you yourself must be an example to them by doing good works of every kind. Let everything you do reflect the integrity and seriousness of your teaching. Teach the truth so that your teaching can't be criticized. Then those who oppose us will be ashamed and have nothing bad to say about us. — Titus 2:7–8

Prayer

Ask God to guard your mind, heart, and actions so that you continue to live in a way that shows Jesus to any who might oppose you.

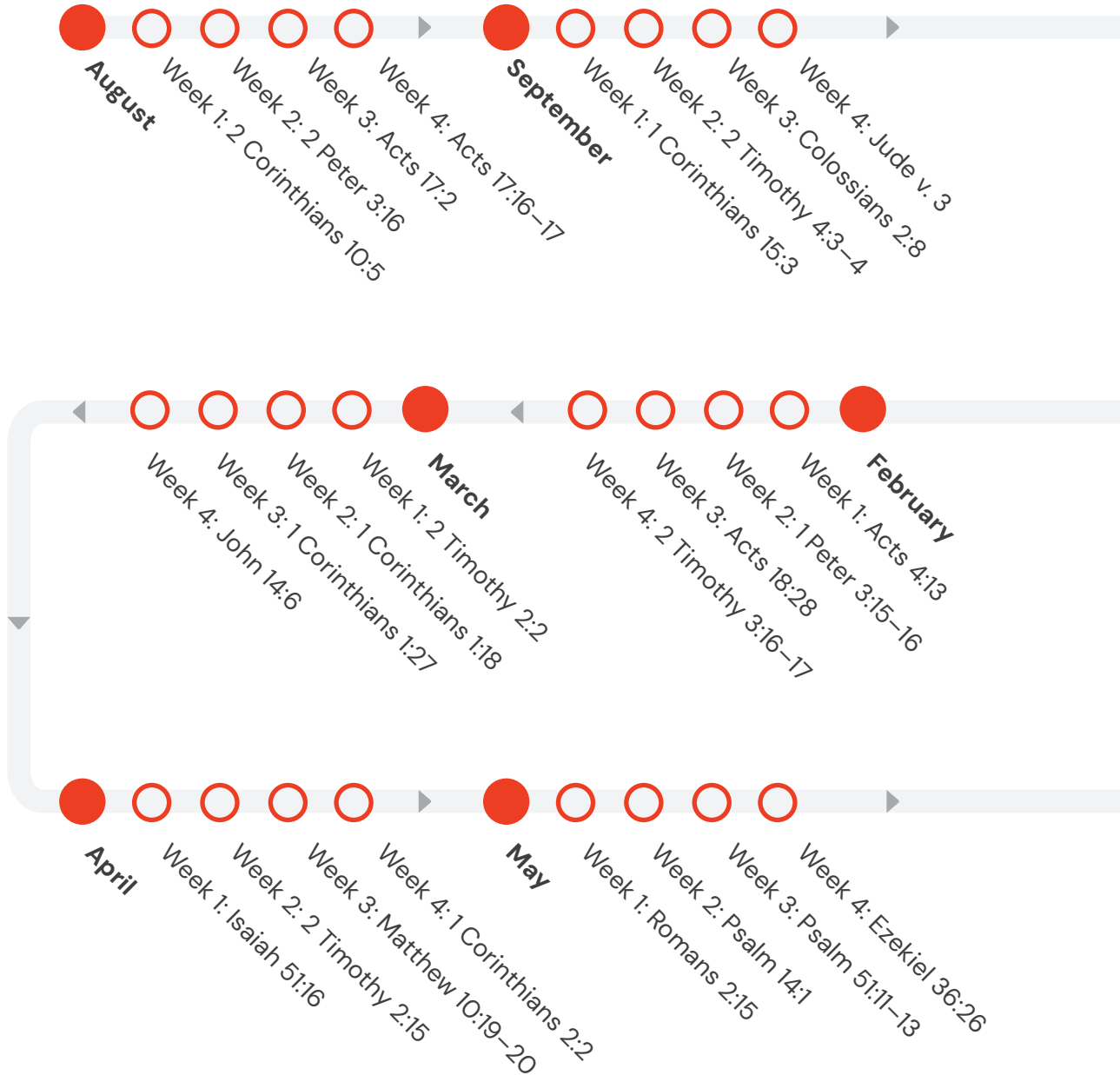


Challenging Thought

It can be hard to navigate opposition gently and humbly. What stops you from responding to opposition well?

Notes:

Memory Verse Tracking Log



TWELFTH GRADE





NEW VISION