

Master Evangelism Class

Lesson 20

The Use of Apologetics in Personal Evangelism

Description: Raphael Anzenberger masterfully takes us through the different processes people face when coming to faith in Christ. In an easy to understand format, he tackles the difficult subject of apologetics in a fresh way. You will come out of this course with a deeper understanding of the journey people walk in order to discover Jesus and be better equipped to help them.

Meet the Evangelist: <https://anzenberger.net> Raphael Anzenberger is an evangelist, speaker and author serving globally, with a passion to raise a new generation of young apostolic leaders. He is Director of RZIM.fr (RZIM for the French Speaking world), President of France Evangelisation and CEO of the Global Evangelists Forum. He serves as ambassador at large for the board of the Conseil National des Evangéliques de France (CNEF) and travels extensively as a consultant in evangelism, church planting and leadership. He is Adjunct Professor of Intercultural Studies at Columbia International University (USA) and teaches globally on evangelism, apologetics and missions. He is the author of *Moi aussi je voudrais croire, mais...* (BLF Europe, 2008), *L'Evangéliste sous toutes ses formes* (BLF Europe, 2013) and *(re)Discovering the Ministry of the Evangelist* (Believers Press, 2015). His first doctoral dissertation dealt with the topic of mentoring younger generations for evangelism (DMin, Columbia International University, College of Intercultural Studies, 2011). His second dissertation dealt with whole-nation saturation church-planting strategies (DPhil, Columbia International University, College of Intercultural Studies). He was named the Billy Graham Lausanne Scholar for 2018. Married with four children, he lives in Nice (France).

Key Scriptures: 2 Timothy 1:12; John 3:8; John 6:68

Key Points:

- You will face different challenges when it comes to personal evangelism depending on the context of the culture in which you minister.
- There are five different thresholds people must cross in order to come to faith in Christ: trust, curiosity, change, seeking, and following.
- Thresholds are places where a wrestling takes place between the person and the Gospel message that they're hearing.
- Evangelism is a process where people try to make sense of what it means to be a follower of Jesus.
- You can't preach the Gospel if you have not become the Gospel. You cannot be the Gospel if you're not living inside a community which is dedicated to the life of the Gospel.
- The birth from above is the work of the Holy Spirit. We cannot provoke people into believing. Everyone at some point has to work through each of the thresholds.

Notes:

We can define each threshold as such:

1. Trust: Often, unless we know the person well, the first time we share our faith with someone we will most likely encounter distrust.

2. Curiosity: We must move people from a place of being cynical of our message to a place of interest.
3. Moving from closed-minded to being open to change: If people are not actually open to change on a personal level, they will never encounter Christ.
4. Seeking: We must help people move from shopping around for everything that is available on the religious market to actually seeking Jesus.
5. Following: We're born-again because it is the will of God that we become His children. It is the work of the Holy Spirit.

In the West, the default mode of belief is actually unbelief.

The Gospel offers an understanding of our current predicament and the human situation which makes it possible to be filled with a hope that will transcend every kind of news that you hear on the media channels every day.

Before we preach the Gospel, we need to be the Gospel. We need to be good news ourselves.

Although the world is distrustful about anything pertaining to religion, when they look at the Gospel message alive in the church they should trust us to bring hope into the world.

In Western culture, relativism is highly valued. In other words, people think, “Who can definitively define truth? Can’t we all just work to get along?”

In apologetics, we have to be mindful that when we say something, any kind of statement for someone to hear, that statement goes through two filters—the plausibility filter and possibility filter.

Evangelism is more than just telling people a statement of faith and saying, “Repeat after me.” It’s faith in the One who made that statement.

Empirical philosophy says, “All knowledge is derived from an authority.”

We need to understand that as we present Christ to people and ask them to change, we are asking them not to just to change behavior; not to just to change their base of knowledge; what we are asking them to do is to change allegiance from one master to another—from one authority to another.

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