

## Class Meeting 6

### Chapter 9 – *Countering Common Misconceptions that Affect Evangelism*

#### **Most Common Misconceptions**

1. What do we mean by biblical faith (faith must have an object)?
2. What part does reason play in someone coming to Christ (belief *that*/belief *in* distinction?)
3. What does it mean in 1 Peter 3:15 to be ready to give an answer?

#### **Biblical Faith**

“Some people see biblical faith as believing something that cannot be demonstrated as true so it must be accepted blindly.” (Norman & David Geisler)

“What is important is not faith itself, but rather the object of our faith.” (Norman & David Geisler)

#### **The Relation of Faith and Reason**

“...What part does reason play in someone coming to Christ? Not understanding how to answer this question plays a large role in why many Christians are unprepared to respond to the influences of skepticism, relativism, pluralism, and postmodernism.” (Norman & David Geisler)

Does the Bible imply that biblical faith is a “blind” faith?

Christianity rises and falls on one single event in history—the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Is Christianity a “leap of faith”?

The Geislers say that Christianity is a step of faith in the light—the light of sufficient evidence.

“Biblical faith involves trusting God in areas that I do not have sufficient knowledge but do have adequate evidence that the one I am trusting is trustworthy.” (Norman & David Geisler)

#### **Being Ready to Give an Answer**

“But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.”  
(1 Peter 3:15)

“We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.” (2 Corinthians 10:5)

“To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some.” (1 Corinthians 9:22)

“For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: to an unknown god. So you are ignorant of the very thing you worship—and this is what I am going to proclaim to you. The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by human hands. And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything. Rather, he himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else. From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands. God did this so that they would seek him

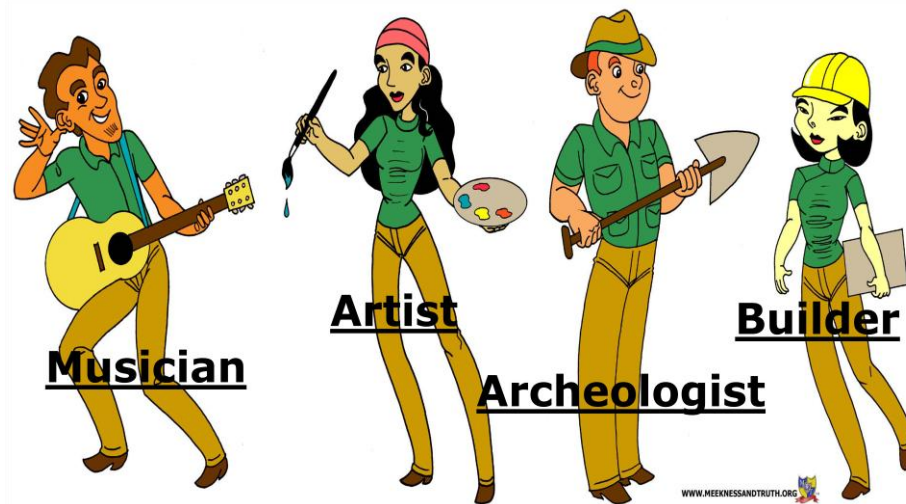
and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us. 'For in him we live and move and have our being.' As some of your own poets have said, 'We are his offspring.' Therefore since we are God's offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone—an image made by human design and skill." (Acts 17:23-29)

### **Redefining What We Mean by Evangelism (Expanded Definition of Evangelism)**

"Every day and in every way helping our pre-believing friends to take one step closer to Jesus Christ."  
(Dave Geisler)

### **Four Types of Conversational Engagements**

There are four types of conversations we want to have with our nonbelieving friends: (1) Hearing Conversations (2) Illuminating Conversations (3) Uncovering Conversations and (4) Building Conversations.



**Role of the Musician** – Listening for the \_\_\_\_\_ people are singing.

**Role of the Artist** – Painting a picture of what a person \_\_\_\_\_.

**Role of the Archaeologist** – Uncovering \_\_\_\_\_ to the Gospel.

**Role of the Builder** – Building a \_\_\_\_\_ to Jesus.

### **Conversational Evangelism Model (in a nutshell)**

We want to "HEAR" their discrepancies and then ILLUMINATE them by asking QUESTIONS that will "CLARIFY" their religious terminology and "expose" the weaknesses of their perspective.

Then we want to UNCOVER THE REAL BARRIERS and "BUILD" a bridge to help them take one step closer to Jesus Christ each day. (1 Corinthians 3:6)

### **Reflection**

1. Do you agree with the authors that clarifying the three key misconceptions Christians have about their faith might lead them to see a great need and desire to use apologetics in evangelism?
2. Remember that if it is legitimate to use apologetics to remove any of our nonbelieving friends' barriers to faith in Christ, whether expressed or not, this will cause a radical shift in how we do evangelism. In every encounter we have with our friends, we will try to discern the obstacles keeping them from trusting Christ and look for opportunities to build bridges by asking thought-provoking questions that could move them a step closer.
3. We may acknowledge that the Bible commands us in 1 Peter 3:15 to give an answer to the questions people ask us about our Christian faith. Many of us attempt to obey the letter of the law for this command, but what would it mean practically if we also were to obey the spirit of this command?
4. If it is really true that what gives our faith its merit is the object of our faith, and what gives our faith its credibility is the evidence we have for the trustworthiness of that object, then what can and should we change in our witnessing to reflect that belief?

### **Application Points**

1. Do you agree with the authors that some of the misconceptions Christians have about their faith have affected our appreciation and use of pre-evangelism in our witness to others? If so, what can you do in your church to help clarify some of these misconceptions in the minds of other Christians?
2. Now that I have a clearer understanding of the proper role of faith and reason in my witness to others, I will (fill in the blank) \_\_\_\_\_ from this day forward.
3. In light of what you learned about what it means in 1 Peter 3:15 to "be ready to give an answer," what can you do practically to make Christ more and more Lord of your life as it relates to your apologetics and evangelistic task?
4. Pray that the Lord will grant you a heart of compassion for those in your circle of influence who do not yet know Christ. Pray also that the Holy Spirit would be your source of strength and wisdom. Now, go into all the world in meekness and in the knowledge of truth, sharing with others by your life and words the Savior you've come to know, and helping them take one step closer to Him each day.