

# CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH





# INTRO – CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH

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SELECTED SCRIPTURES

JULY 7<sup>TH</sup> , 2020



1. What Does It Mean to Contend For The Faith?
2. Why Contend For the Faith?
3. How to Contend For the Faith?



# 1. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO CONTEND FOR THE FAITH?

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➤ ἐπαγωνίζομαι 'epagonizomai' – To Contend

✓ To exert intense effort on behalf of something

➤ ἀπολογία 'apologia' - To Defend

✓ To make a speech in defense of something

“To put forth evidence and arguments demonstrating that Christianity is true”

## 2. WHY CONTEND FOR THE FAITH?

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**A.** The Bible Commands It (1 Pet. 3:15; John 14:15)

**B.** The Bible Exemplifies It (Luke. 20:1-8; Acts 9:22, 29; 17:2-4, 17; 18:4,19; 19:8-10; 28:23-24)

**I.** Prove – To Put Together

**II.** Argue – To Search and Examine Together

**III.** Reason – To Dialogue, To Engage in Speaking



# 3. HOW TO CONTEND FOR THE FAITH?

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## A. The Divisions / Kinds

### I. Offensive / Positive (1 Pet. 3:15)

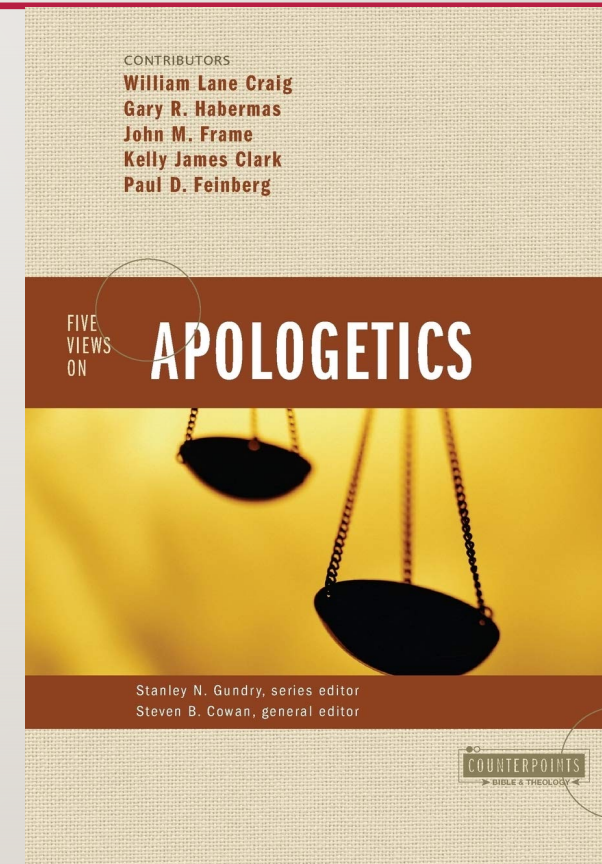
- a. Natural Theology (Proofs for God's existence)
- b. Christian Evidence (Why I believe Christianity is true)

### II. Defensive / Negative (2 Cor. 10:5; Tit. 1:10-11)

- a. Natural Theology (Problem of evil)
- b. Christian Evidence (Reliability of the Bible)

### 3. HOW TO CONTEND FOR THE FAITH?

- A. The Divisions / Kinds
- B. The Approaches / Views
  - I. The Classical Approach
  - II. The Evidential Approach
  - III. The Cumulative Case Approach
  - IV. The Reformed Epistemological Approach
  - V. The Presuppositional Approach



### 3. HOW TO CONTEND FOR THE FAITH?

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A. The Divisions / Kinds

B. The Approaches / Views

I. The Classical Approach

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# 3. HOW TO CONTEND FOR THE FAITH?

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A. The Divisions / Kinds

B. The Approaches / Views

I. The Evidential Approach

II. The Presuppositional Approach

a. That God Exists (Gen. 1:1)

b. The Spiritual Condition of Man (Eph. 2:5)

c. The Love for Immorality (Rom. 3:23; John 3:19)

"I want atheism to be true and am made uneasy by the fact that some of the most intelligent and well-informed people I know are religious believers. It isn't just that I don't believe in God and, naturally, hope I'm right in my belief. It's that I hope there is no God! I don't want there to be a God; I don't want the universe to be like that."

Thomas Nagel, *The Last Word* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 130.



# 3. HOW TO CONTEND FOR THE FAITH?

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A. The Divisions / Kinds

B. The Approaches / Views

I. The Evidential Approach

II. The Presuppositional Approach

- a. That God Exists (Gen. 1:1)
- b. The Spiritual Condition of Man (Eph. 2:5)
- c. The Love for Immorality (Rom. 3:23; John 3:19)
- d. The Role of the Word of God in Conversion (James 1:18, 21)



# 3. HOW TO CONTEND FOR THE FAITH?

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A. The Divisions / Kinds

B. The Approaches / Views

I. The Evidential Approach

II. The Presuppositional Approach

III. Why Be Involved in Contending For the Faith

- a. Go back to the 2 reasons considered earlier i.e. the Bible Commands and Exemplifies it
- b. To show that the unbeliever has no intellectual ground to stand on (John 3:19-20)
- c. To strengthen the faith of the believer (Rom. 12:2)

### 3. HOW TO CONTEND FOR THE FAITH?

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- A. The Divisions / Kinds
- B. The Approaches / Views
- C. The Attitude
  - I. Remember the Grace and Goodness of God to You (Rom. 5:8-11)
  - II. Respond with Gentleness and Respect (1 Pet. 3:15)

### 3. HOW TO CONTEND FOR THE FAITH?

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- A. The Divisions / Kinds
- B. The Approaches / Views
- C. The Attitude
- D. The Best Kind of Apologetics
  - I. The Impact of a Transformed Life (Zacchaeus in Luke 19, Paul in Acts)
  - II. The Genuine Love Within the Body of Christ (John 13:34-35)



# GROUP DISCUSSION

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- A. What does it mean to contend for the faith?
- B. What are the two approaches to contending for the faith?
- C. Have you had any experiences that you can share with the group contending for the faith?