

Apologia Study Guide

Reasons to Believe for Skeptics, Seekers, & Believers

Apologia
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The Movie – INTRODUCTION

The primary purpose of the Apologia series is for seekers, skeptics and believers to better understand the Christian Faith and for believers to give sufficient answers to objections to the Faith. Apologia is a defense of the Christian Faith in the tradition of Apologists from ancient times until now.

The Bible is clear that to truly be a faithful Christian disciple we are to love Christ and people, follow and grow in our relationship with Jesus Christ. Jesus said many would know about and even call on Him as Lord, Matthew 7: but scripture teaches that they do not follow God by not doing His Will! Jesus gives 4 warnings about superficial Christianity in the Sermon on the Mount. Superficial Christianity is very common in our world today. This Series along with the Book is designed to strengthen our faith, teach people about defending the Christian Faith and help believers be able to witness and give good answers to people's objections.

Study Guide:

Watch the Apologia Introduction once and make mental notes.

The film starts with the Universe coming into being.

Read these Creation accounts:

Genesis 1:1-5, Job 38:4-7, Psalm 33:6-15, Psalm 104:1-9,
Colossians 1:15-16, Hebrews 1:2, John 1:1-5, 14

1. What insights do you draw out of these Biblical descriptions of Creation, ESPECIALLY John 1:1-5?

2. Carl Sagan (astronomer & agnostic) and R.C. Sproul agreed the Universe had a beginning.

Sproul asked: *‘‘Every effect has a cause—so what caused this incredible energy that burst forth to become the Universe?’’*

Sagan simply said: *‘‘I do not want to go there!’’*

What are your thoughts about the origin of the Universe and why?

3. In each of the Jesus film clips something beautiful is depicted about Jesus. When people get to know Jesus, they develop a deep love for Jesus like David in the Psalm 27:4, or Peter in John 21: 15-17.

In the depictions of Christ, He spoke of His mission Luke 19:10, our mission Matthew 4:19, heals and forgives sins Luke 5: 17-26, miraculously provided food Matthew 19: 13-21, walked on water, Peter attempted to walk on water Matthew 14: 22-33, preached wonderful sermons, rose and left the empty tomb Luke 24: 1-11, and had many Post Resurrection appearances John 20: 24-29.

What do these Biblical events tell us about Jesus?

4. The crucifixion clip is very bloody.

Why is the blood of Jesus very important, and what does the Substitutionary Sacrifice mean for us?

(Isaiah 53:6, Romans 5:9)

In any film depiction of Jesus, we need to compare the scene with the Bible. We can learn greatly by comparing what God's Word says. When the film varies from the Bible, we can learn the truth by studying the Word.

5. Do you have a favorite Biblical film scene? What film and why do you like it?

Christianity moves forward quickly. We begin with the Resurrection that is compared to an atomic bomb going off in history.

6. Why this comparison? Why is the Resurrection the most significant event in history? (1 Corinthians 15:12-23)

7. In the film very important events are mentioned. The rapid growth of the Christian faith covering the Roman Empire in three centuries, the Ascension, the promised Return of Christ, outpouring of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-13). Believers in Jesus Christ boldly preach the Gospel and many respond (Acts 2:14-41), many are incredibly blessed where some lost their lives as martyrs (Acts 7:51-60).

When you hear these words: Ascension, Return of Christ, Pentecost, bold preaching, martyrdom—what comes to mind?

8. Dr. Bybee discusses life's ultimate questions and the folly of thinking everything came from nothing.

What is your reaction when an educated scientist says the world and universe all came from nothing?

9. What if you found a large sphere in your backyard—would you say it came from nowhere?

Is it reasonable to say the beauty and complexity around us just happened with no intelligence behind it?

(Romans 1:19-20)

Watch the film a second time to prayerfully examine what you learned. Join the 8-part Apologia series on common sense, logic, science, Jesus, the validity of the Bible, the Resurrection, and more.

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The Film Study Guide – Episode 1
Life's Quest for Meaning

Watch the entire Episode 1 and make mental notes.

We are faced with many questions in the human experience.

Science (empiricism) cannot answer ultimate questions—Christianity gives complete answers.

1. What are some questions you find in life? What are life's biggest, ultimate questions?

Why can't science answer them? How does the Christian Faith answer them?

Reflect on these:

- Who am I? (Gen. 1:27-28)
- Does God exist, and what is He like? (Gen. 1:1, Col. 2:9)
- Why am I here? (Gen. 1:27-28)
- What is my purpose? (Rom. 11:36, 1 Cor. 10:31; *"the supreme purpose of humanity is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever"*)
- How can I live a joyful life? (Gen. 12, John 15:9-17)
- Why is there suffering in the world? (Gen. 3–4)
- What happens after I die? (Heb. 9:27, 2 Cor. 5:8, 1 Thess. 5:23)
- Is history headed somewhere? (Matt. 24:30, Rev. 1:7)

2. This episode amplifies that life is short: *"You do not even know what will happen tomorrow! You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes."* (James 4:14)

What do you think of this verse from James' description of life's fleeting nature?

Most philosophies and religions attempt to answer ultimate questions.

Atheism, naturalism, and secularism say: **“There is no purpose—or make your own.”**

Christianity gives clear, God-given purpose.

My prayer is that as you view and process this Film series God will pour out His Grace and Spirit upon you and that you may deeply ponder the fact that you are made in God’s Image and God can reveal His purpose, Eph. 2:8-10. A transformation can take place that is unspeakably wonderful!

3. What are your thoughts about the animation that ends with Leon Patillo’s testimony? Leon saw people like question marks. What are your thoughts on the animation and Leon’s testimony?

What does it mean that people are “question marks”?

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The Film Study Guide – Episode 2
We Live in a World of Contradictions

The Bible gives a mandate: *‘‘If someone asks about your Christian hope, always be ready to explain it.’’* (1 Peter 3:15)

This episode is about building sound reasons to believe, crafting good arguments, and spotting false or unsound assertions.

Have you seen sound vs. unsound assertions on the news?

Isaiah 5:20: *‘‘They say what is right is wrong and what is wrong is right.’’*

1. Do we see right and wrong confused in society? Give examples.

As followers of Jesus, we must develop critical thinking—the systematic evaluation of information to make reasoned judgments.

Jesus amazed people with His answers (Luke 20:26).

Paul, the apostle, was trained by one of the renowned thinkers of the time, Gamaliel (Acts 22:3), used his skills for God’s glory (Acts 17:16-34, Romans 6:19-23, 1 Cor. 15:1-20).

Even imperfect answers are empowered by the Evidence, the Truth, and the Holy Spirit!

Three historic tools of thought:

Induction – Deduction – Revelation

(Replay the film if needed.)

The Revelation of scripture and human experience tells us the human race is very confused, running from God with poorly thought-out reasons.

Read and reflect on human confusion and the answer to the condition (Romans 3:9-19, 3:23-26)

Jesus is the great light that shows true reality (Luke 1:78-79).

2. What other tools for good reasoning are mentioned in the film?

3. What is a fallacy?

4. Give some reasons why you believe in Jesus Christ—or why some people are unsure of faith in Christ.

5. How do you see the true reality of Plato's Cave compared to Christian conversion?

6. In **Pilgrim's Progress**, what does it mean that Christians fled the City of Destruction with a heavy burden toward Calvary and then the Celestial City?

7. Give an example of how you would share reasons to believe in Jesus.

My prayer is we will find new, cogent ways to answer the world's objections to Christ—the Center and Source of life and truth.

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The Film Study Guide – Episode 3
Only God Can Design Us

This episode shows the incredible complexity of DNA (Psalm 139:14).
Prominent atheists like Anthony Flew (Oxford) and Francis Collins (Human Genome Project) came to faith by seeing overwhelming design in the molecular world.

If one human cell's DNA were stretched out, it would be 3 meters long.
All DNA in an adult human would stretch from Earth to the Sun and back ~70 times.
The complexity of this micro-world outperforms any supercomputer.
DNA is God's blueprint for life—a miniature factory in every cell.

Life cannot come from non-life (abiogenesis is scientifically impossible).
Colossians 1:17 — **"In Him all things hold together."*
Random chance and mutation are mathematically impossible for creating life.
Stanley Miller's experiments failed.
Biologist Dean Kenyon abandoned abiogenesis after discovering the complexity of cellular information systems:
**"The most compelling evidence of design on Earth."*

Young Earth vs. Old Earth views are presented (author takes no position).
Augustine held an Old Earth view long before modern science.
Louis Pasteur: **"The more I study nature, the more I am amazed at the Creator."*

1. What do you think of the pictures of the molecular world and its massive intelligence?

2. What fascinates you about the design of a cell—amino acids, proteins, DNA?

3. How do you perceive God as you study the molecular world?
(Colossians 1:15-16)

4. Where did it all come from?

If your child found a coloring book full of trees, mountains, and animals on a park bench and asked, “Where did this come from?”—would you say “nowhere”?

No—someone made it.

So who made Earth?

5. What do you think of the Young Earth and Old Earth positions?

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The Film Study Guide – Episode 4
As We Look Up, We Are Awed — the Heavens Declare the Glory of God

Just as there's a micro-world of wonder, the macro-universe is vast and breathtaking.
View galaxies, stars, planets, or the night sky.

Psalm 19:1 — **"The Heavens proclaim the glory of God. The skies display His craftsmanship."**

Science confirms: the Universe had a beginning—the Bible said it first (Genesis 1:1).
Our universe is fine-tuned with the:

- Right kind of galaxy
- Right kind of stars
- Right kind of solar system
- Right kind of planet
- Right kind of moon

One astronomer estimates the odds of a life-friendly planet by chance = 1 in 10^{129} — impossible.

Albert Einstein: **"God is the greatest scientist. The complexity of the Universe could not have come from chance."**

John Lennox: **"I see God not in the gaps I don't understand—but in the bits I do."**

Fred Hoyle: **"A super intellect has monkeyed with physics, chemistry, and biology, and there are no blind forces worth speaking about in nature."**

John 1:3 — **"Through Him all things were made: without Him nothing was made that has been made."**

1. As you view galaxies, stars, or the night sky—what are your thoughts?
(Psalm 19:1-4)

2. What are your thoughts that the Bible said the Universe had a beginning—long before science?
(Genesis 1:1)

3. What is your answer to someone who says you’re just “filling in the gaps” with God?
(Rewatch fine-tuning clip; read Psalm 8, esp. v.3)

4. What do you think of Earth being in the perfect spot in our galaxy and solar system for discovery?

5. How do you feel when you see a sunset or look up at the starry sky?

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The Film Study Guide – Episode 5
The Greatest Person Who Ever Lived

The last two episodes demonstrated that God is precise in His creation — General Revelation (Romans 1:20).

“Since the World was created, people have seen the Earth and sky. Through everything God made, they can clearly see His invisible qualities, His eternal power, and divine nature.” So, they have no excuse for not knowing God.

The Reformers and Church Fathers elaborated on this great truth of General Revelation.

People suppress the truth because of sin (Romans 1:18-23) worshipping false idols, like nature and their minds become dark and confused.

Many say *‘‘I see God in nature’’* - but want a personal relationship.

Jesus is God who became flesh and dwelt among us (Matthew 1:23). Jesus is God speaking Revelation directly to humanity called Particular Revelation.

He speaks directly and in a personal way (Matthew 7:28-29, Colossians 1:15, Acts 4:12).

Jesus is more than a prophet, spiritual leader, great teacher, holy man, Jewish rabbi, but the only True God who created the Universe including humans made in His image. He is Creator in the flesh (John 1:1-5).

If one reads about life before Christianity or life outside the influence of Christianity, we perceive a strangely dark existence, with human life having little value.

Alvin Schmidt’s book lists countless ways Jesus transformed the world in wonderful ways like education, hospitals, dignity, justice.

1. In what way do you see God’s craftsmanship in nature?

2. Have you talked to someone running from God and suppressing the truth?
How do you respond in love?

3. Based on Colossians 1:15-22, what does God's Word teach about Jesus—and how we have been blessed as believers?

4. Can you think of ways the Christian Faith has influenced the world?
(e.g., public education, hospitals, human rights)

5. What are some reasons people are incredibly fascinated with Jesus?

6. If you are a believer, how has Jesus Christ affected and changed your life?

7. Name some ways Jesus has changed our world and personal lives.

Only one force, one power could and does continue to transform our human existence, history, and our very being in such a broad global way: Jesus.

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The Film Study Guide – Episode 6
The Bible is More Than a Book

Watch Episode 6 and make mental notes.

Christians see the Bible as God's very Word.

Read Matthew 4:4, Psalm 40:7, Ephesians 6:17, 2 Timothy 3:16-17.

When Satan tempted Him, Jesus used Scripture correctly (Matthew 4:1-11).

Jesus constantly quoted God's Word.

The Bible is the best-selling book of all time and has been translated into over 2,000 languages. The Bible is the most studied book of all time. It is critical that the believer read, study, and process sermons from God's Word. Our greatness as a nation and blessings as an individual are based on our faithfulness to God's Word.

Abraham Lincoln: *"I believe the Bible is the best gift God has ever given to man. All good, the good from the Savior of our world, is communicated to us through this book."*

The Bible can be misinterpreted like the devil in the Garden, (Genesis 3:1).

John Calvin: *"A person with a lack of understanding of how to interpret the theology of the Bible is like an insane person wielding a sword."*

Much of the Old Testament Mosaic legal and dietary code were fulfilled in Jesus — not part of the New Covenant. Matthew 5:17, Mark 7:14-15, Acts 10:9-16.

Principle: If a Mosaic law isn't repeated in the New Testament, it's not for New Covenant believers.

Dead Sea Scrolls prove incredible accuracy in transmission.

F.F. Bruce: *"If the New Testament were a collection of secular writings, its authenticity would be regarded as beyond all doubt."*

1. What do these passages tell you about the Bible?

(Matthew 4:4, Psalm 40:7, Ephesians 6:17, 2 Timothy 3:16-17)

2. How important is the Bible to followers of Jesus?

3. What was Jesus saying about Himself by quoting Isaiah 61:1-2 in His hometown—
and why did the people get angry?

(Luke 4:16-30)

4. Can you think of Old Testament Mosaic laws fulfilled in Jesus and not part of the
New Covenant?

5. What do the Dead Sea Scrolls teach us about the accuracy of transmission of the Bible?

6. Why does the Bible stand far above any ancient literature in accuracy and reliability?

7. What are your thoughts on clear Biblical prophecies?

(e.g., Micah 5:2 & Matthew 2:5; Daniel 2:1-49)

8. What do you think about the Richardsons and the Saur Tribe?

The more you prayerfully ponder and reflect on God's Word you realize its supernatural quality.

“All scripture is inspired by God and is 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.

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The Film Study Guide – Episode 7
Jesus Is Alive

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ is a divine bombshell dropped into the heart of the world, loaded with truth, and utterly transforming in its effects.

(1 Corinthians 15:1-8, 20)

Christianity is not a dead philosophy — it's built on a living Savior, Jesus who is alive. The empty tomb shocked the world then — and still does. The Resurrection of Jesus is the cornerstone of the faith, without the Resurrection there would be no Christianity, the disciples were all eyewitnesses to the event, (Acts 2:32).

Professor of History Dr. Edwin Yamaguchi says "What gives a special authority to the list of witnesses as historical evidence is the reference to most of the 500 people being still alive. Paul says in effect, "If you do not believe me, you can ask them." Such a statement in an admittedly genuine letter thirty years after the event is almost as strong evidence as one could hope to get for something that happened nearly two thousand years ago."

It is important to remember that the critics of the Christian movement could not refute these claims. No matter how hard the opposition tried, they could not refute the evidence of fulfilled scripture, the multitude of eyewitnesses, the broken sealed and guarded tomb, the empty tomb, nor the appearance of the Risen Lord.

As Law Professor Simon Greenleaf wrote: "It was therefore impossible that they could have persisted in affirming the truths they have narrated, had not Jesus actually risen from the dead, and had not known the fact as certainly as they knew any other fact."

Those who believe in the Resurrection of Jesus can face death and eternity with more than confidence; we have been promised in scripture, from eyewitnesses and from Jesus who is alive, that we shall have a magnificent future and sure hope now, 1 Corinthians 2:9, Philippians 3:20-21.

"If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in your heart that God has raised Jesus from the dead, you will be saved" Romans 10:9

David Hume ruled out the Resurrection like many people because it does not fit their worldview which is not based on clear evidence but to the contrary. Hume says no one can experience a miracle because miracles do not happen, that is, in Hume's world.

Hume rules out the very possibility of a miracle at the beginning before any inquiry. Hume breaks basic principles of logic, the conclusion is taken for granted in the premises, the fallacy of begging the question.

1. How does Jesus' Resurrection change history and transform those who follow Him?
(1 Corinthians 15:1-8, 20)

2. How would you share the evidence for the Resurrection with love? Give an example.

3. What does it tell you that 1 in 8 people have had a near-death experience?

4. Read Matthew 28:17, Luke 18:7-8, Revelation 1:18 — share your thoughts.

The evidence for the Resurrection is overwhelming. The Jewish leaders took extreme precaution to keep Jesus' corpse in the tomb. The Roman soldiers would lose their lives if they did not guard the tomb with extreme diligence. The scattered and

frightened disciples would not and could not steal the body and then with great courage live and die for a lie. No, the fact is, Jesus is alive, and walked out of the tomb, and is preparing a Kingdom for His followers in Heaven and will return!

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The Film Study Guide – Episode 8
Christ Died for the Church

The Church of Jesus Christ is like no other institution on earth. The Church is the founding cause of relief for the poor, the ill and the needy in history. For example, hospitals across the world were originally established by the Church. Educational institutions are a product of the Christian Church. The list is enormous of how the Church has renovated cultures and the world around us.

The Church is invisible, yet visible. The invisible church is Christ's Body of true believers from around the world and through the ages. The visible church is mixed with true believers and unbelievers, and some churches have so degenerated that they are not the Church at all. While many churches shine in a beautiful way.

Increasingly in our world some churches emphasize philosophical, political, social views that are in opposition to the Bible. It is critical we attend and embrace a Bible Based Church where the teaching of God's Word is proclaimed.

The marks of a true Church of Jesus Christ are as follows:

- Worship God, John 4:23
- Faithful preaching from God's Word, 2 Timothy 2:15.
- Administer the Lord's Supper and Baptism 1 Corinthians 11:24, Matthew 28:19.
- Reaching out to the world with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- Evangelism, Matthew 28:18-20.
- To make disciples, followers of Jesus Christ, 2 Timothy 2:2.
- Be about Mission, Psalm 96:3, Mark 13:10.
- Be about ministries of the Mercy, Matthew 25:31-46, James 2:14-26.
- Express a new Christ-like nature of love, empathy, kindness and forgiveness to all

Separating ourselves from the darkness of this fallen world, Galatians 5: 16-23, Romans 12:2, 1 Corinthians 15:33.

It is up to each believer to make the Church, Body of Christ, the best and most faithful it can be. The Church is not perfect until Christ's Return. The Church gives a foretaste of the age to come. Through the Holy Spirit the Church ministers in many ways while

communicating glimmers of God's powerful presence until Jesus Christ's Glorious Return!

1. Can you think of ways the Church has been a blessing to you?

2. Discuss the difference between the invisible and visible church.
(Matthew 13:24-30)

3. Recognizing the marks of a true church, is everyone in a visible church saved?

4. What positive effects have you experienced from the Church?

5. Is it more important to be popular in culture—or faithful to God?
(1 John 2:15-17)

6. What place do you have in the Body of Christ?
(1 Corinthians 12:27)

7. What are your thoughts about your local church?

8. What positive things can you say about the Church around the world?

The film shows two churches on opposite sides of the globe — one in a bamboo hut, one in a cathedral. In Assam we built a new church made of bamboo and palm branches. It is always nice to have a beautiful space to gather to worship but what is more important?

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The Film Study Guide – Epilogue

Watch the Epilogue and reflect.

To seek out God is not new to the human condition. In fact our spiritual journey is an innate drive within all people through the age and in every culture, secular and non-secular. Referencing the famous Merced Eliad's book, *Sacred and Profane*, where it is powerfully argued that even non-believers are drawn to religious behavior like the ancients. The problem is that without true believers' belief in God people wander into idolatry and false worship and confusion.

If we reject what Jesus Christ taught, we are damned forever, which is a central warning of Jesus; Matthew 13, Mark 9:43, Matthew 10:28, Luke 16:25, Matthew 25:46, Luke 13:24-28.

To have Salvation is to:

1. Believe and accept that God loves you, John 3:16, Romans 5:8.
2. Realize that our fallen/sin separates us from God, Romans 3:23,6:23.
3. Be willing by the power of the Holy Spirit to turn (repent) and embrace, surrender, and believe in Jesus as our Savior and Lord, Mark 1:15, Acts 4:12, John 14:6, Matthew 7:13-14, John 6:44, Revelation 3:20-21.
4. Believe= Greek is Pisteuo, means, reliance, trust in, faithful, trust-worthy, rely on, have faith in, being persuaded by the Lord.

To believe in Jesus is more than an intellectual agreement or ascent. Believing in Jesus Christ involves a surrender of the heart, mind and soul and a passionate love for God while it creates a desire in us to follow Jesus in a daily, prayerful relationship. For Jesus to be Lord of our life we are called to be His disciple.

During Jesus' earthly ministry he was traveling through the region of Caesarea Philippi, which is a place where many "false gods" were celebrated and received devotion. Jesus asks his disciples, "Who do you say I am?" (Matthew 16:15) Simon Peter made the great confession, "You are the Messiah, the son of the living God." (Matthew 16:16)

Only Jesus transforms history, cultures, and hearts — from Asia to Africa to the Americas. *"God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself."* (2 Cor. 5:19)

1. What confusions about life's purpose do people believe today?

2. Why did Jesus perform so many miracles?

3. What was so fascinating about Jesus' teaching?

4. What is the most important miracle in Jesus' life?

5. Why does Christianity stand far above all other ideas about life and God?

6. How do arguments over justice, evil, empires, and even pie fights point to God?

7. What evidence would you share that God exists?
(sunsets, stars, babies, etc.)

8. What evidence shows Jesus is God who lived among us-and lives with us by the Holy Spirit?

9. What are your thoughts on Pascal's Wager and Pascal's Wager 2.0?

10. Can you find and list Scriptures for these disciple practices:
Worship • Prayer • Bible Study • Fellowship • Service • Christ-likeness • Witness • Humility

11. Share your faith with someone. What is your testimony?
(Non-believers: What can you say about Jesus?)

12. What are your thoughts on the final clip: the self-righteous man vs. the humble sinner?

13. How do you think the tax collector lived after meeting Jesus?
(Matthew 19:1-9)

14. The Apologia Film gives many reasons to believe. God being the Creator of the Universe, gives us real purpose to life. Name some.
