



## Acts 7:1-54

### Stephen's Apology

Historically, apologetics, or an apology, is an explanation or argument designed to persuade another person to accepting a position or philosophy.

Today, an Apology is “a regretful acknowledgment of an offense or failure”, and is a substitute for admitting wrong and/or sinful actions and asking for forgiveness.

- a. This is why we don't apologize for doing wrong, we \_\_\_\_\_ for forgiveness.
- b. Apologizing always includes an \_\_\_\_\_, or a rationalization.
- c. Asking for forgiveness submits my guilt to the right of your punishment.
- d. Forgiveness assumes the pain, penalty, cost, or sentence \_\_\_\_\_ oneself.

Apologetics (from Greek ἀπολογία, "speaking in defense") is **the discipline of defending religious doctrines through systematic argumentation and discourse**. Early Christian writers (c. 120–220) who defended their beliefs against critics and recommended their faith to outsiders were called Christian apologists.

1. Stephen was the first \_\_\_\_\_ of “The Church”.
  - a. He systematically rehearsed God's calling, interactions, deliverance, and promises as described in the Old Testament.
  - b. He used accepted and common truths to establish the vault of evidence.
  - c. He showed them how to find Jesus in the prophecies.
  - d. He called for their repentance.
  - e. He did not take anything back when they did not respond favorably. (51-53)

#### One thing not to miss:

1. His “Apology” was \_\_\_\_\_ accepted, even though it was from the Holy Spirit. (6:15, 7:55)
2. There is \_\_\_ mention of new believers, conversions from any group, or church growth
3. But God was \_\_\_\_\_ out the Great Commission, and \_\_\_\_\_ Saul to become Paul.

**How to be an effective apologist:**

**1. Know what \_\_\_\_\_ is foundational to your beliefs.**

- a. The flood is foundational to your geological conclusions.
- b. The fall is foundational to your evangelical/gospel conclusions.
- c. Inspiration and Inerrancy are foundational to your trust in God's Word.

Stephens foundation for believing that Jesus is the Messiah is that the Old Testament describes him in detail and all prophecies have been fulfilled.

**2. Know what your \_\_\_\_\_ ground is.**

- a. Rock formations, erosion patterns, and observable catastrophes are common ground to all geological discussions.
- b. A world full of sinful things, sinful people, and corruption is common ground for discussion the need for a savior.
- c. Scientific, geographical, and historical facts are common ground in discussing the validity of God's Word.

Stephens common ground was the shared belief that the O.T. was God's Holy Word.

**3. Always identify pre-suppositions (\_\_\_-existing biases and beliefs) and expectations.**

- a. If the Bible is true when it says #@\$%^@#!, then we should expect to see ...
- b. If evolution is true when it says ^^(\*\*%^#@#!, then we should expect to see ...  
(If there is no God, the Bible is just a book, there was no flood, religion is fake)
- c. How do these expectations compare with reality.

Stephens pre-supposition was that if Jesus was the Messiah, he would match up perfectly with O.T. prophecies and descriptions of the Messiah – which Jesus did.

**4. Call for a \_\_\_\_\_ in thinking, this time working back to your pre-supposition.**

- a. Since we find in our observations what could be logically predicted if this particular pre-supposition was true, then it must indeed be true.

Stephen's singular point was that Jesus was the Messiah, and if they wanted their sins forgiven, they needed to embrace this belief, not reject it.

The singular point of your apologetics should always be that Jesus is our \_\_\_\_\_, we need to be \_\_\_\_\_ of our sin, and then we need to live \_\_\_\_\_ Him.