

>>> *next*  
*step* >>>  
apologetics

There are two avenues for a discussion and application of an apologetics study. Apologetics is a fancy word that simply means “to give a defense.” This is the art and ability of being able to defend your faith in Christ to a culture that often finds it difficult to understand or appreciate such faith. As Christians we are called to be able to give a defense at all times for the hope that is in us with gentleness and reverence and with a clear conscience (1 Peter 3:15-16). Regardless of what college you go to, or whether or not you go into the work-force out of high school, you are required to be able to speak about Christ and be able to share your faith and also defend it against attack from the outside.

Therefore, the two avenues are as follows:

- 1) **We must understand and know the truth of Christ.** We must be diligent to seek the Scriptures, understand more fully the nature of God and who He is and His love for us, having been poured out on the cross, and the power of the new era of grace where the Spirit dwells in us.
- 2) **Apologetics is lives being lived in the context of nonbelievers.** Apologetics is not an academic exercise exclusively (although that does have value). When believers rub shoulders with those that don't know Christ, we should naturally be in conversations about truth and the Gospel. The problem with most of us, however, is that we never speak about Christ outside of church or cell group.

In the next several years of your life, your faith in Christ will be challenged. This is assured. Ask your leaders what were some of the most difficult challenges to they faced in their college years. How did they handle it? What was the outcome?

We have to address the Avenue #1 first. Hopefully, in the course of your time in FSM, you have attained a decently robust understanding of the Scripture. But, just to accentuate this, turn to 2 Peter 1. Walk through the first chapter of this book. Notice how many times Peter speaks of “knowledge” and having “diligence” to “remind” the church of the “true knowledge” of Christ.

**Discuss::**

What is the true knowledge of Christ? How will you “remind” yourself and each other of the truth of God? What will you do in the next four years to “apply all diligence” in gaining a more full understanding of Christ? What expectation do you have for yourself for your study and time in the Word over the next four years

**Ask your leaders how they handled these above questions after they got out of high school.**

Now that we have briefly addressed Avenue #1, we can move on to Avenue #2 and this is where it gets interesting. It is unhelpful to discuss apologetics in a vacuum because life is not lived in a vacuum. Apologetics is life on life with people that don't know Christ. Therefore, we want you to do the following- create a “Cultural Survey” that you will go out and perform in the community. Here's how it should look:

Split up into groups of two and craft 5-7 questions on the following types of topics:

- A) The origin of life (where did we come from?)
- B) the meaning/purpose of life (is there one?)
- C) the destiny of man after death (is there an afterlife and what may it be like?)
- D) Is there a God and what might he/she be like?
- E) Thoughts on Jesus?
- F) Thoughts on Christians?

We are leaving it up to you to craft these questions. You have the ability to do so. Write them down. Avoid writing questions that have “yes” or “no” answers. Avoid writing questions that are inappropriate (i.e.: “Do you think you will go to hell when you die for not believing in Jesus?”) Make them very open-ended questions.

Before leaving cell group tonight, finish crafting them and have your leaders look over them to make sure they’re appropriate and will be good questions to use.

### NEXT CELL GROUP

Meet at your host home for five minutes, pray, then leave in groups of 2 and go to places where people are. Coffee shops, the promenade or mall, big stores, places where you know there will be people. Politely go up to people and say, “We are performing a Cultural Survey for a class, may we ask you a few questions?” If they say “NO”, then say thank you and move on. If they say “yes”, be respectful and read the situation. They may be willing to talk for a while, they may be in a hurry. Be sensitive to that. You may get into a long conversation and you may not. Record the answers on paper or using an iPad or computer.

**Remember:** You are there to LEARN! You are not there to argue with them. If they ask you what you believe, don’t hesitate to talk about your faith, in fact...you should answer them honestly and talk about your belief in Christ. But you are there primarily to learn. Conversations happen, so go with it if it becomes a Gospel convo. DO NOT ARGUE! Have some discernment, if they come across as wanting to argue with you about Jesus and prove that He’s somehow wrong because they assume you’re from a church, then be respectful and get out of there. Side-note, I would not wear your “This shirt is illegal in 52 countries” or your shirt with John 3:16 on it. Look normal, act respectful, learn from them, and enjoy talking with people that may not believe the way you do.

### NEXT CELL GROUP

Come back in and discuss your conversations. What was inconsistent that they said? What was a great point that really stumped you? What caught you off guard? How would you defend Christ against some of the things that were said? What did the people think of Christians? Did you have any Gospel convos?

Like we stated above, apologetics cannot be done in a classroom vacuum, only. It will primarily be done like this when you’re in college or at work. So, don’t be afraid to talk to people about what they believe. But be ready to talk to them about the hope in you!

### **Two avenues:**

- 1) how will you make it your earnest desire to KNOW Christ more fully in the next four years?
- 2) How will you engage the culture in a way that is with gentleness and reverence, but willing to share Christ?