



What's Your Belief Type?

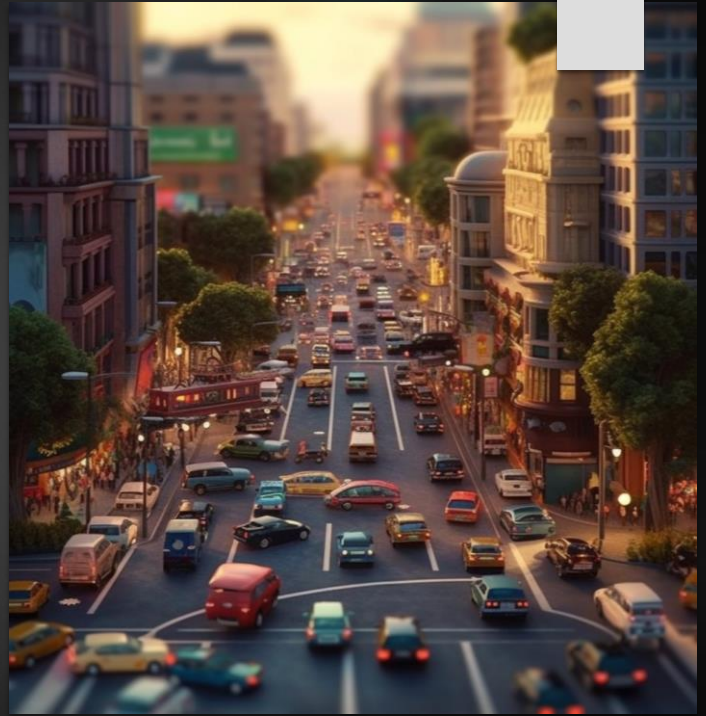
A project by Shawn Nelson

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Introduction

- ▶ “Every Christian has a belief type. Do you know what yours is? In this interactive class, we’ll explore the apologetic methods that have resonated with individuals from all walks of life, **uncovering the reasons for conversion**. We’ll also invite you to take a personalized assessment, designed to reveal **insights into your own unique faith journey**. Join us and embark on an adventure that could transform the way you think about Christian belief and deepen your own spiritual formation along the way!”



Introduction

Class description:

“Every Christian has a belief type. Do you know what yours is? In this interactive class, we’ll explore the apologetic methods that have resonated with individuals from all walks of life, **uncovering the reasons for conversion**. We’ll also invite you to take a personalized assessment, designed to reveal **insights into your own unique faith journey**. Join us and embark on an adventure that could transform the way you think about Christian belief and deepen your own spiritual formation along the way!”

QUESTION

- “Why did you decide to join this class? What are you hoping to get out of it?”



Understanding Apologetics

WHAT IS APOLOGETICS?

Understanding Apologetics

QUESTIONS

- "What comes to mind when you hear the word 'apologetics'?"
- "Have you ever had to defend your beliefs? How did it feel?"

What is apologetics?

- Apologetics is from Greek 'apologia' - meaning defense.
- It simply means defending the Christian faith.

Its role and importance in Christianity

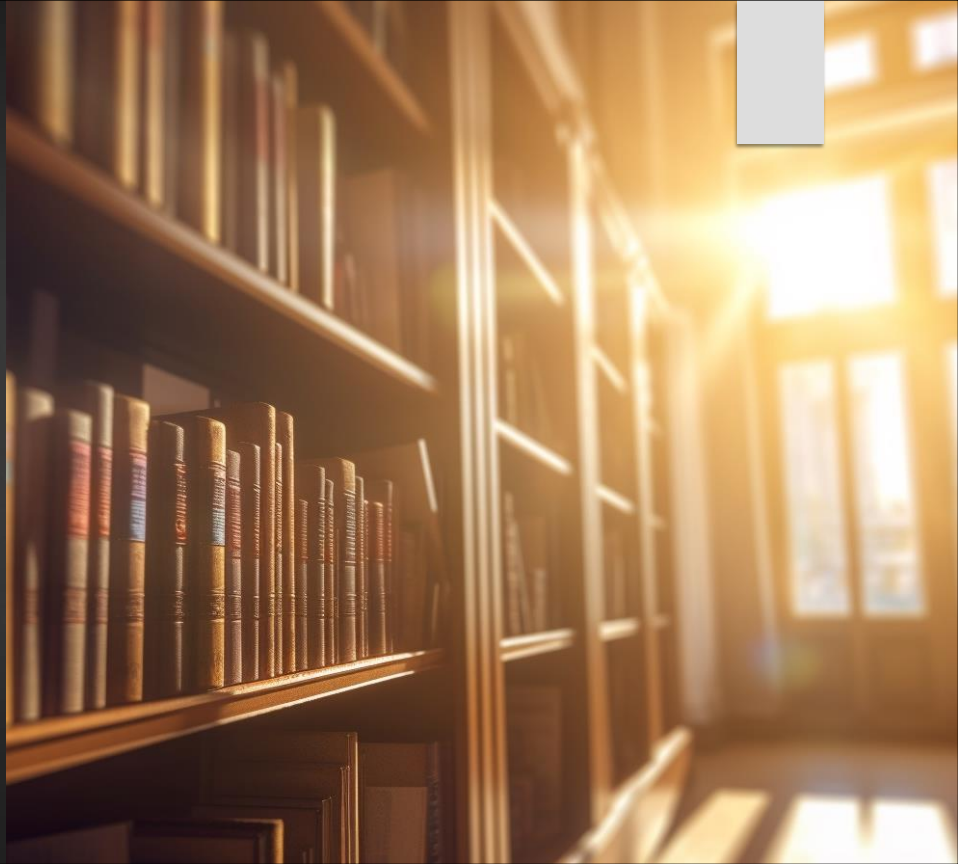
- We see apologetics in the Bible
- Acts 22:1 – Paul said, "Brothers and fathers, listen now to my defense (*apologia*) before you."
- Phil. 1:16 – Paul said, "I am appointed for the defense (*apologia*) of the gospel..."
- Peter 3:15 – "Always be ready to offer a reasoned defense (*apologia*) for the hope within, but with gentleness and respect."

Apologetics in this project

- Normally when people talk about apologetics, they are thinking about reasons to give to unbelievers to help convince them Christianity is true.
- Here's the sense I'm using it in this project:
Apologetics: "A look into the different ways people come to believe in Christianity and the reasons they stay convinced of its teachings."

Project Background

- ▶ This study comes from my academic work at Veritas International University.



Project Background

- This study comes from my doctoral work.
- Studied under Norm Geisler at Veritas International University.
- Many professors argue their apologetic approach is correct.
- I wanted to survey the people directly to see which apologetic methods had the most influence.

APOLOGETICS ASSESSMENT

14% Complete

2 of 7

I came to believe Christianity was real because I experienced God in some way or I saw God at work in a friend's life.

Yes, very much!

Yes, somewhat

Yes, a little

No

Don't know

The following thought *helped me become a Christian*: "Everything makes sense if we just assume God exists."

Yes, very much!

Yes, somewhat

Yes, a little

No

Don't know

Apologetics Assessment

GeekyChristian.com/survey

Apologetics Assessment

- Designed it so anybody can take.
- Don't have to know anything about apologetics.
- Takes about 15-20 minutes

geekychristian.com/survey

I realized my life wasn't working and I believed Christianity was something that would improve my life.

Yes, very much!

Yes, somewhat

Yes, a little

No

Don't know

I remember having a sense of God before becoming a Christian.

Yes, very much!

Yes, somewhat

Yes, a little

No

Don't know

I just assumed the Bible was the Word of God.

Yes, very much!

Yes, somewhat

Yes, a little

No

Don't know

Apologetics Assessment

GeekyChristian.com/survey

Example of some more questions


YOUR APOLOGETIC

REPORT FOR SHAWN NELSON, AUGUST 2, 2020

Based on these answers.

HOW YOU BECAME A CHRISTIAN

The grid below shows which apologetics played a role in you coming to believe Christianity is true. Higher values show more influence.

 Click arrow (▼) to see what each row means!

APOLOGETIC	YOUR SCORE
▼ Reformed Epistemology	13
▼ Psychological Apologetics	12
▼ Pragmatism	12
▼ Experientialism	8
▼ Presuppositionalism	7
▼ Cultural Apologetics	7
▼ Scripturalism	6
▼ Verificationism	5
▼ Comparative Religious Apologetics	3
▼ Rational Apologetics	0
▼ Classical Apologetics	0
▼ Fideism	-1
▼ Evidentialism	-1


Influences At Conversion

Influences At Conversion

When finished, you'll get a report showing which apologetic methodologies had the most influence at conversion.

WHERE YOU ARE AT TODAY

The next grid shows your attitude about each apologetic today. Apologetics at the top likely keep you convinced Christianity is true.

 Click arrow (▼) to see what each row means!

APOLOGETIC	YOUR SCORE
▼ Classical Apologetics	24
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▼ Evidentialism	16
▼ Psychological Apologetics	14
▼ Cultural Apologetics	14
▼ Verificationism	12
▼ Pragmatism	6
▼ Comparative Religious Apologetics	6
▼ Experientialism	1
▼ Presuppositionalism	-2
▼ Reformed Epistemology	-7
▼ Scripturalism	-9
▼ Fideism	-13

Influences After Conversion

Influences After Conversion

You'll also see which apologetic methodologies had the most influence after conversion (i.e., what keeps you convinced Christianity is true today).

Belief Type Project

- ▶ We can make this easier!
- ▶ Can condense 13 apologetic methods into 7 belief types
- ▶ Here they are...



Belief Type Project

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7 Belief Types

1. Intervention
2. Experience
3. Behavior
4. Results
5. Assumption
6. Evidence
7. Reason



These belief types shape our faith journey, both at conversion and afterwards.

7 Belief Types

- Here are the belief types which make up all the different apologetic methods.
- Each believer has one or more belief types. This class will help you discover what your belief types are.
- These belief types shape our faith journey, both at conversion and afterwards.
- Don't worry about what each one is right now—that's what this class is for—we will look at a new one each week!



R.E.D.
B.E.A.R.

Memory Tool

We can use the acronym R.E.D. B.E.A.R. to remember.

Here they are on one slide...

RED BEAR – Belief Types

1. **Results** - I know Christianity is true because it improves my life
2. **Experience** - I experienced a supernatural event or felt the presence of God.
3. **Divine Intervention** - God intervened and opened my eyes.
4. **Behavior** - the Bible best describes my brokenness in myself and the world.
5. **Evidence** - I am convinced it's true by the evidence.
6. **Assumption** - I started with the assumption that God was real, or the Bible was true.
7. **Reason** - I am convinced it's true because of rational or philosophical reasons.



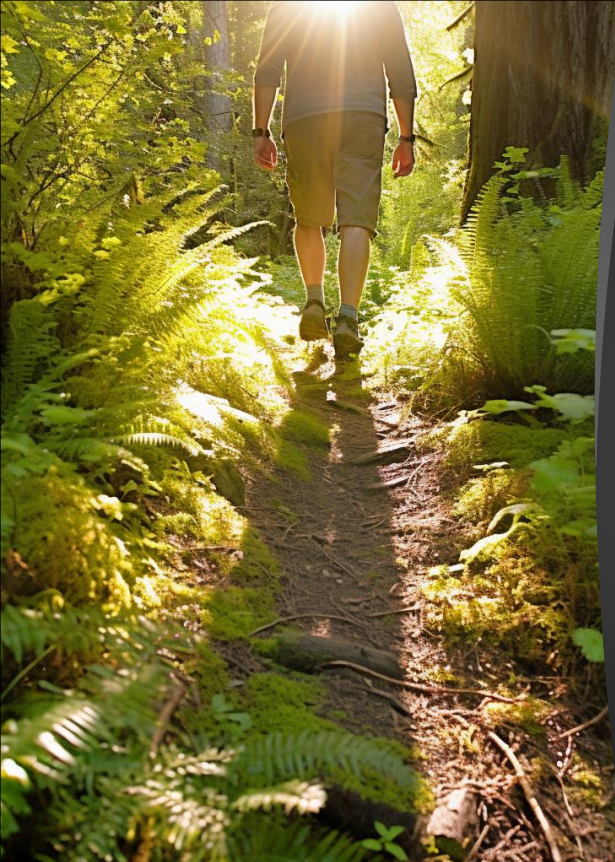
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3 Key Takeaways from this Project

- ▶ **Faith-Building:** Reflecting on our journey strengthens our faith.
- ▶ **Encouraging Evangelism:** Knowing our belief type helps us connect with others better.
- ▶ **Broadening Apologetics:** It's a universal tool for ALL Christians, not just a select few who are into evidence/reason.

3 Key Takeaways from this Project

- **Faith-Building:** Reflecting on our journey strengthens our faith.
 - The Power of Testimony:
 - *Revelation 12:11 states, "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony."*
 - Each believer has a unique testimony—a personal story of God's intervention, guidance, or grace. Sharing these stories not only edifies and encourages other believers but also serves as a reminder of God's faithfulness in one's life.
 - God's Hand in our Past:
 - *Psalm 77:11-12 says, "I will remember the deeds of the LORD; yes, I will remember your miracles of long ago. I will meditate on all your works and consider all your mighty deeds."*
 - Reflecting on the past enables us to see patterns of God's intervention and guidance. Even in moments that might have seemed random or chaotic at the time, reflection can often reveal God's purpose and plan.
- **Encouraging Evangelism:** Knowing our belief type helps us connect with others better.
 - Sales Analogy
 - Recognizing belief types allows for tailored communication, much like understanding a customer's personality aids in effective sales.
 - Takes the Pressure Off
 - The assessment reveals that only 10% needed reason and evidence at conversion. Most came to faith through some other means. This

emphasizes that evangelism is much more approachable than we think.

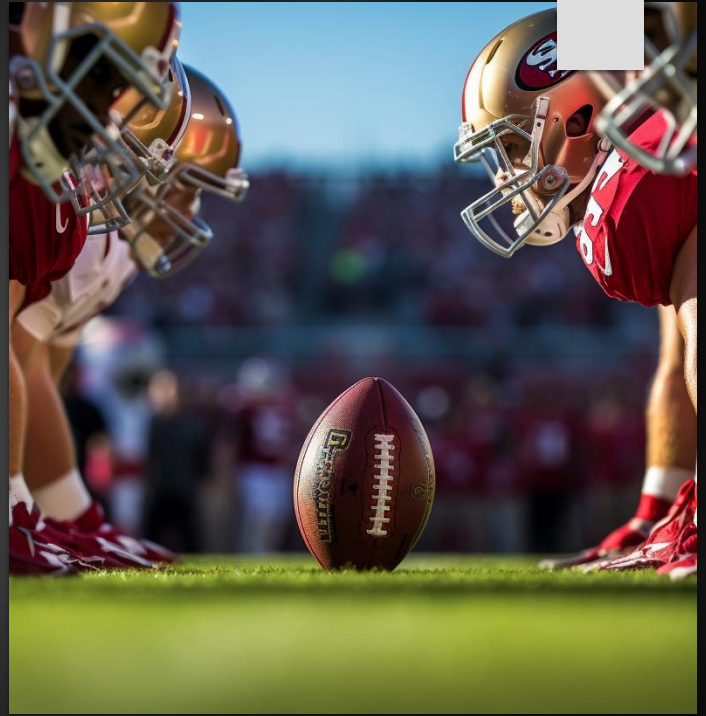
- **Broadening Apologetics:** It's a universal tool for ALL Christians, not just a select few who are into evidence/reason.
 - Many in the church have a narrow view of apologetics.
 - But it encompasses so much more than evidence and reason.
 - All Christians have a reason for what they believe—and this is apologetics.

QUESTIONS

- "Have you ever taken an assessments that delves into your leadership style, personality type, or spiritual strengths? What did you uncover about yourself? How did it help you? Did it impact your view of those around you?"
- "Can you recall a specific moment where, upon reflection, you recognized God's hand guiding an event or decision in your past? What impact did this have on you or the people around you?"
- "What aspect of tonight's class resonated with you the most?"
- "Is there a particular point or topic from tonight's session that you're eager to explore further or discuss?"

Gameplan

- ▶ Take the online assessment at home:
geekychristian.com/survey
 - ▶ The assessment still uses the academic terms for research
 - ▶ But over the next few weeks I will explain how it connects to the 7 belief types
- ▶ Each week we will look at one of the belief types
- ▶ If we have volunteers, we can talk through your assessment at the beginning of the session, as a class project
- ▶ Please give me feedback on this project!



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