Apologetics - Week 15 - Tactics - Part 1

Getting ready for this week

- Columbo Tactic - Video
- Tactics - the book. I highly recommend it.

"Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned, as it were, with salt, so that you may know how you should respond to each person." Colossians 4.6

This lesson will discuss tactics for using apologetics for sharing our faith to accomplish:

- Initiating gospel conversations effortlessly
- Present the truth clearly, cleverly, and persuasively
- Graciously and effectively expose faulty thinking
- Skillfully manage the details of dialogue
- Maintain an engaging, disarming style even under attack

The Columbo Tactic

- This is named after the famous TV detective
- It revolves around asking situational appropriate questions
- The key is to go on the offensive in an inoffensive way by using carefully selected questions to productively advance the conversation.
    - Simply put, never make a statement, at least at first, when a question will do the job.

Advantages of Asking

- Questions are sincere and flattering
    - They invite genial interaction from the other person
    - You are showing genuine interest by asking their opinion.
        - A lot of people are never asked their opinion on any subject
- You'll get an education
    - You will really learn what someone thinks...instead of assuming
- Questions allow you to make progress on a point without being pushy
    - Also, by asking questions you are not making statements
        - If you are not pushing your own point, you have nothing to prove and therefore nothing to defend.
- Carefully placed questions put you in the driver's seat
    - Once you learn how to guide a conversation you can better get to the point.
- Jesus used this method frequently
    - **Luke 20.24, Luke 20.4, Mark 2.9**

The Basics

- "What do you mean by that?"
    - This is gathering facts

        - First, this engages the person in an interactive way.
            - It also uncovers valuable information about what they think
        - Second, If you don't understand a person's point you may misrepresent it.
            - This is never good.
        - Don't be surprised if you don't get a good answer.
            - The majority of people have no idea why they believe what they believe.
                - They don't know what they "mean by that."
- "How did you come to that conclusion?"
    - This question helps you know why he thinks the way he does.
        - Expect some blank stares. You may be surprised, but most critics are not prepared to defend their faith.
    - Alternative explanations are not refutations
        - Explaining something with a story is not the same as giving a solid argument.
            - Richard Dawkins - flight example
                - Stories don't settle anything
            - Ask three questions here: Is it possible, plausible, probable?
- Now use 'leading questions' to lead the conversation
    - Questions can be an effective way to lead people to a conclusion
    - This does require knowledge of some kind
        - Thus our reasons for studying apologetics for weeks and weeks
    - Point out errors with questions instead of just telling people where they are wrong
    - This takes practice. You will get better over time.

Practicing

- In the real world you have about a 10 second window to get the conversation going.
    - You must speak up to keep the conversation going.
    - You may be conflicted on how to continue
    - Using the Columbo Method gives you an easy starting point
        - But practice will help make it easier
- Scenario 1
    - "It's not rational to believe in God. There is no proof."
- Scenario 2
    - "Christianity is basically the same as all other religions. The main similarity is love. We shouldn't tell others how to live or believe."
- Scenario 3
    - "You can't take the Bible too seriously because it was only written by men, and men make mistakes."
- Scenario 4
    - "It's wrong to force your views on other people. You can't legislate morality. Christians involved in politics violate the separation of church and state."