“How Do You Develop an Apologetics Ministry Within a Church?”

First off I want to commend you on your approach to defending and sharing the truth and love of the Gospel, as you show respect for others, without backing off from your discovery and communication of truth. It is very refreshing to see! I have two questions.

First, do you have any suggestions for ways to develop an apologetics ministry within the church? Second, I am considering pursuing a more focused apologetics/evangelistic ministry path, apart from working inside a church. I am definitely considering pursuing a Masters, or possibly Doctorate, degree. Are there any schools (Christian or secular) or degree programs that you would recommend with my ministry goal in mind? Also, are there any career paths that you would suggest for that type of pursuit, i.e. professor of philosophy at a secular university, speaker, or working at Probe Ministries? Thank you for your time. And again, I appreciate your ministry and your respectful approach to it.

Thank you for your kind letter and we are pleased that you have found our site both encouraging and helpful.

There are several suggestions about starting an apologetics ministry through the church, but it must be a two-pronged approach. Christians must be schooled or trained to some degree in apologetics and there must be regular opportunity to encounter non-Christians in a non-threatening manner. A simple reading group can be arranged for Christians to read helpful apologetics-oriented books like Lee Strobel’s *Case for Christ* and *Case for Faith*. You could schedule a Probe Mind Games Conference and offer the Basic Defense Track. (Click on the

"Mind Games Conference" button on our home page for information.) For the most part, Christians today not only do not really know *what* they believe, they certainly don't know *why*. To encounter non-Christians, you could host a regular film night or reading group. These groups would watch or read secular movies and books which raise worldview or ethical issues. With a mixed group, Christians can begin to hear what non-Christians really believe and think and begin to interact with them just by stating opinions. This can be enjoyable and non-intimidating. A moderator needs to be skilled in not letting some people dominate the discussion or get preachy.

There are a couple of Christian universities and seminaries that offer programs in apologetics. I believe that Trinity International University (www.tiu.edu) in Deerfield, Illinois offers such a program. Biola University (www.biola.edu) in Los Angeles also contains the Talbot School of Theology which offers apologetics and worldview-related programs through Professors John Mark Reynolds and J. P. Moreland. Southern Evangelical Seminary (www.ses.edu) in South Carolina is heavily geared towards apologetics. Famed apologist Norm Geisler is its president. Denver Seminary (www.denverseminary.edu) offers a degree in apologetics. I also know that Bryan College (www.bryan.edu) in Dayton, Tennessee utilizes worldview heavily in their undergraduate programs but I don't know if they have a graduate program that specializes in apologetics.

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