

A Reasonable Faith: Christian Apologetics

Part 1

September 26, 2017

Immortal, invisible, God only wise,
In light inaccessible, hid from our
eyes,

Most blessed, most glorious,

The Ancient of Days,

Almighty, victorious,

Thy great name we praise.

Unresting, unhasting,
And silent as light,
Nor wanting, nor wasting,
Thou rulest in might;
Thy justice like mountains
high soaring above
Thy clouds which are fountains of
goodness and love.

To all life Thou givest,
To both great and small;
In all life Thou livest,
The true Life of all;
We blossom and flourish
as leaves on the tree,
And wither and perish—
but naught changes Thee.

Great Father of glory,
Pure Father of light,
Thine angels adore Thee,
All veiling their sight;
All praise we would render;
Oh, help us to see
'Tis only the splendor of light that
hides Thee

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The Mission Field Today

- Post-Christian
 - Post-churched
 - Post-Constantinian



The Mission Field Today

- Modern
(Enlightenment)
 - Rational
 - Secular
 - Naturalistic
 - Materialistic



The Mission Field Today

- Postmodern
 - Relativistic
 - Perspectival
 - Pluralistic
 - Pragmatic



The Mission Field Today



- I don't believe that God exists. There is no evidence for a god.
- The Bible is full of errors. Why should I care what it says?
- Science has disproven the Bible and made religious faith obsolete and unnecessary.

The Mission Field Today



- There is no such thing as absolute truth.
- There is no set of morals or beliefs that are for all people at all times. If you don't believe this, you are intolerant and arrogant.

The Mission Field Today



- All religions teach essentially the same thing.
- What really matters is sincerity. Not what you believe.
- Religion is just a matter of personal preference. If it works for you, fine. I prefer science and reason.

The Mission Field Today



- It's narrow-minded and intolerant to claim that Jesus is the only way to salvation.
- If God is good and all-powerful, why is there so much suffering and evil?
- If God is loving, why would he send people to hell?

The Mission Field Today



- Jesus was just a good teacher. It's his followers that have made him into something more.
- Why do Christians care about who I love? Gay marriage is about love. Who does it hurt?
- Christianity and other religions have on the whole been harmful to society.

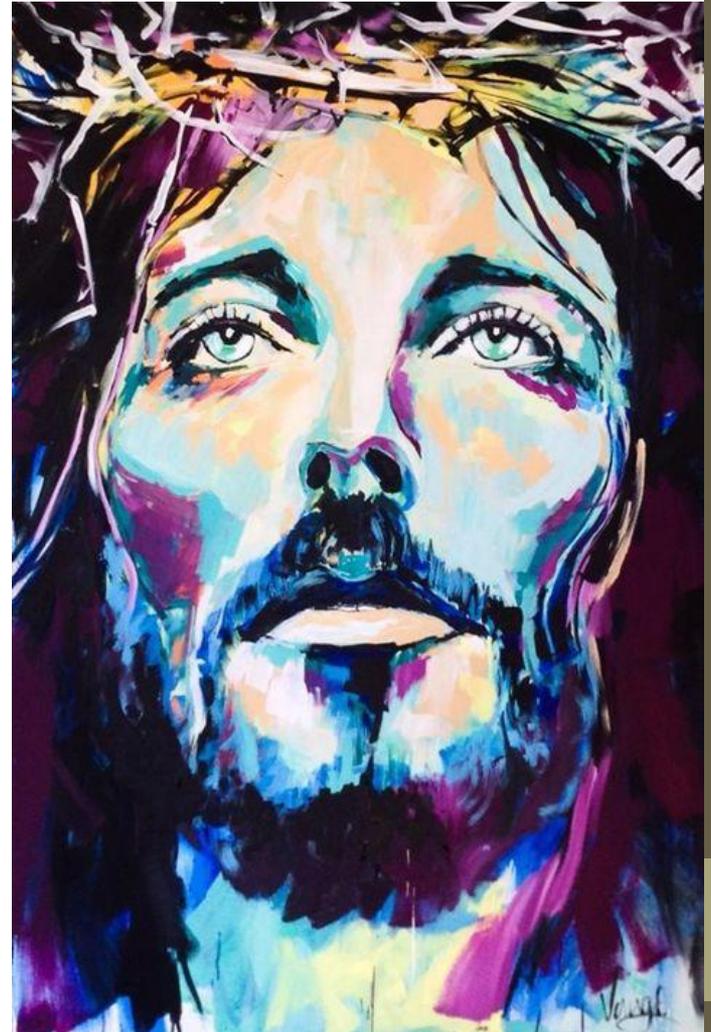
Questions about ...

- God
- Truth
- Morality
- Purpose



Key Starting Points

- Jesus loves atheists and skeptics.
- Jesus loves non-Christians.
- He has sent us as missionaries to this culture.
- We need to engage with them to reach them.
- Our worldview has been affected by current philosophies.



Introduction to Apologetics

“But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.”

1 Peter 3:15-16

Introduction to Apologetics



- “An answer”
 - ἀπολογία
 - *apologian*
- What is Christian Apologetics?
 - A defense of the Christian faith based on **reason** and evidence.

Introduction to Apologetics



- Can we reason someone to faith?
 - NO!
- What is the missional purpose of apologetics?
 - Remove obstacles
 - Pre-Evangelism

The Goal of This Class



- That we might be better equipped to engage in faith conversations with non-Christians.
- That we will be able to ask questions that invite people to articulate what they believe and why they believe it.

The Biggest Apologetic Evidence

- The behavior of Christians



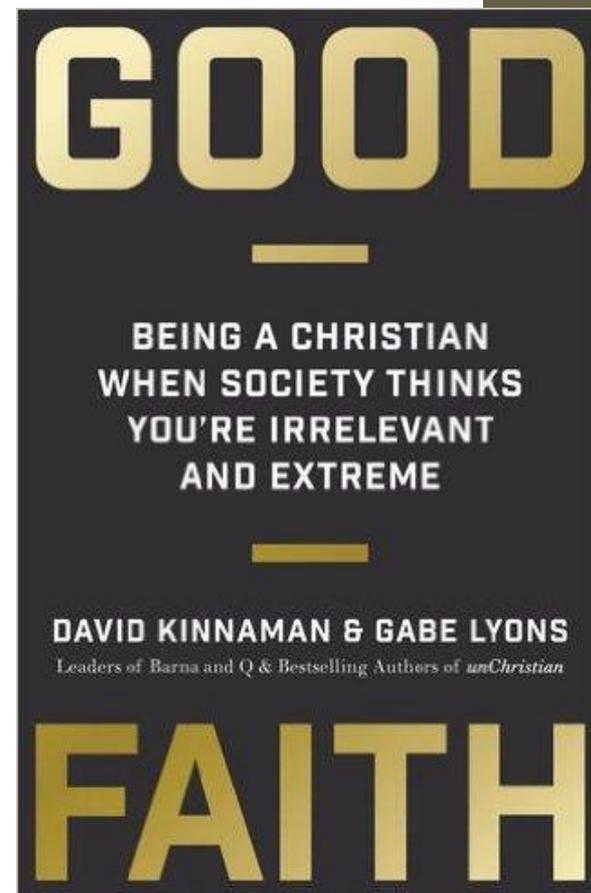
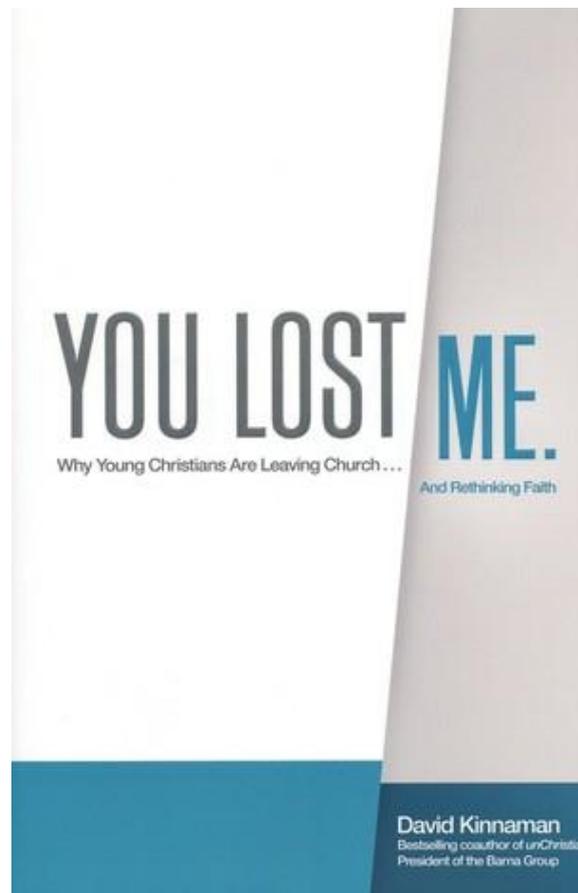
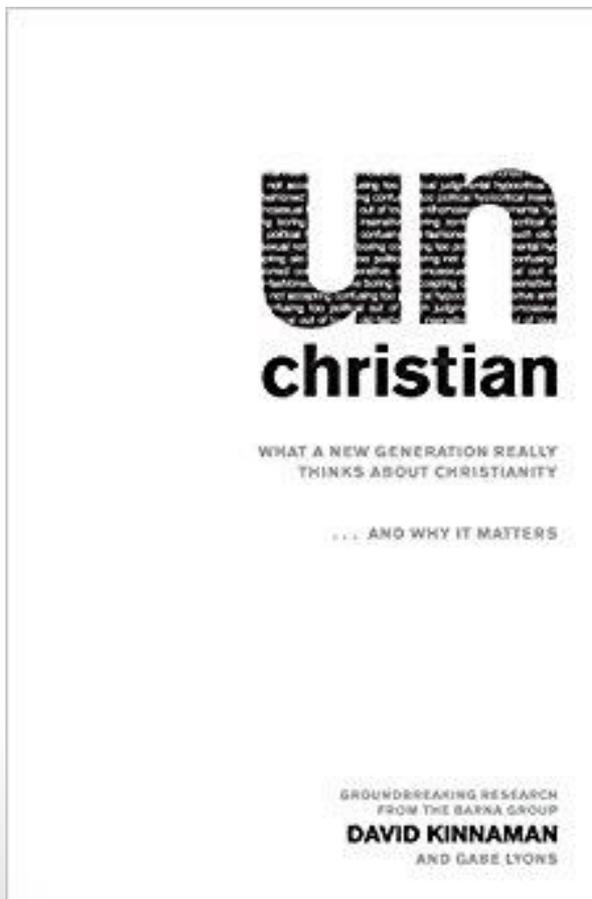
When we Christians behave badly, or
fail to behave well, we are making
Christianity unbelievable to the
outside world

— C. S. Lewis —

AZ QUOTES

The Biggest Apologetic Evidence

- What do non-Christians think of Christian?



Christians are . . .

- Hypocritical

*Perception:
Christians say
one thing but live
something
entirely different.*

Christians are . . .

- Hypocritical
- **Too focused on getting converts**

*Perception:
Christians are
insincere and
concerned only
with converting
others.*

Christians are . . .

- Hypocritical
- Too focused on getting converts
- **Anti-homosexual**

*Perception:
Christians show
contempt for
gays and
lesbians.*

Christians are . . .

- Hypocritical
- Too focused on getting converts
- Anti-homosexual
- **Sheltered**

*Perception:
Christians are
boring,
unintelligent, old-
fashioned, and
out of touch with
reality*

Christians are . . .

- Hypocritical
- Too focused on getting converts
- Anti-homosexual
- Sheltered
- **Too political**

*Perception:
Christians are
primarily
motivated by a
political agenda
and promote
right-wing politics.*

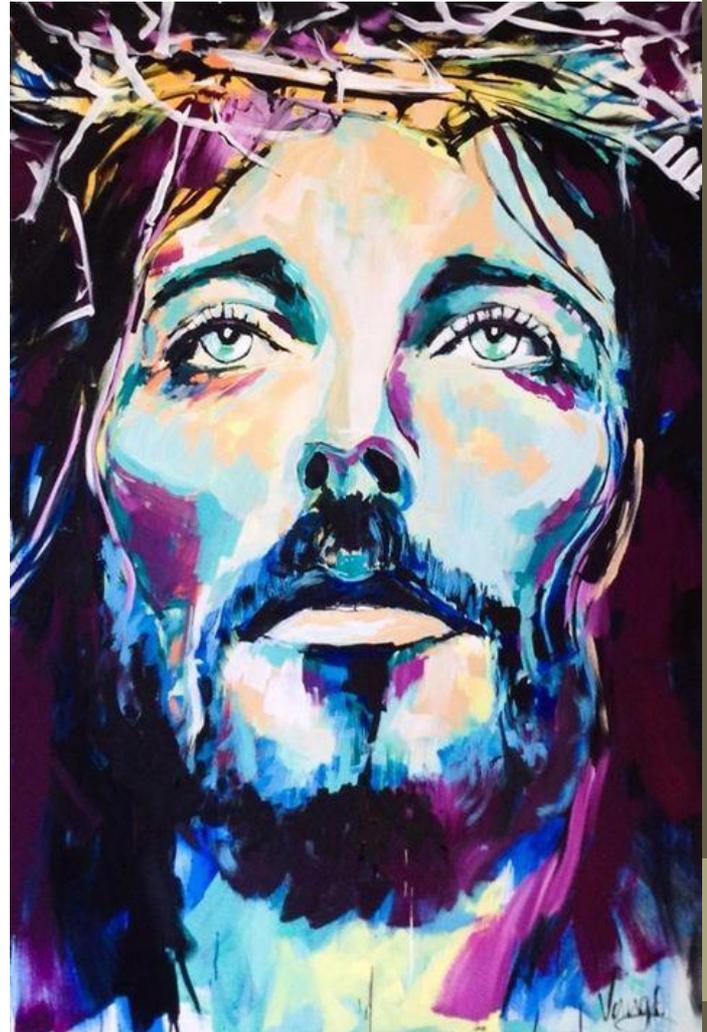
Christians are . . .

- Hypocritical
- Too focused on getting converts
- Anti-homosexual
- Sheltered
- Too political
- **Judgmental**

*Perception:
Christians are
prideful and
quick to find
faults in others.*

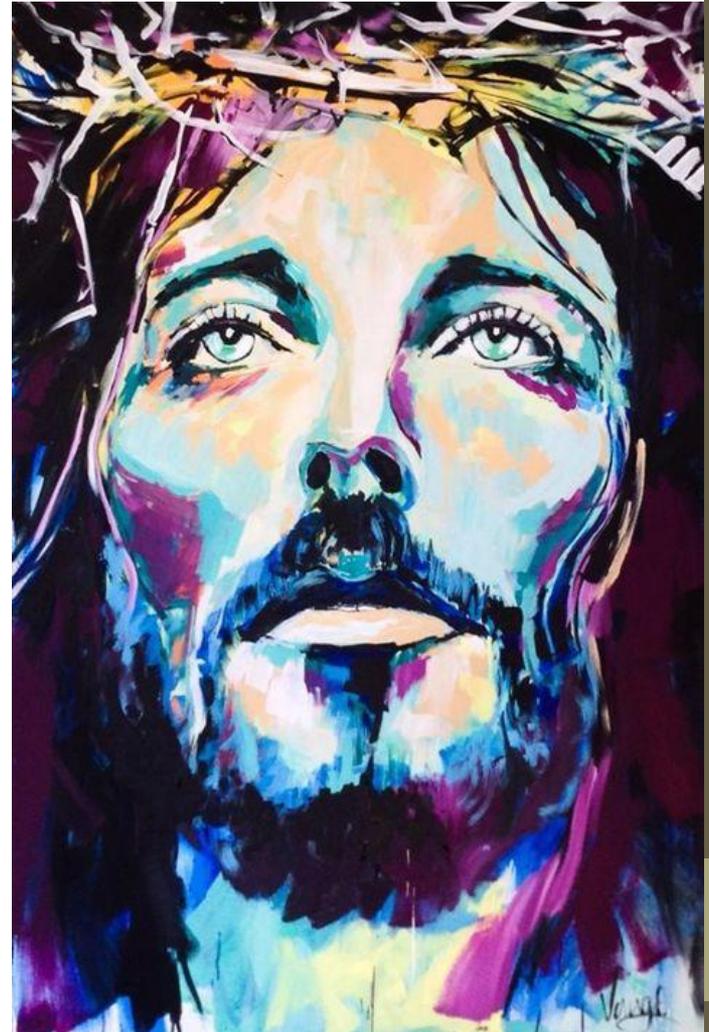
Living Missionally

- Being transparent about our **flaws**.
- Loving and serving others without an **agenda**.
- Showing compassion and love to all people, regardless of their **lifestyle**.



Living Missionally

- Being engaged and **informed** about the issues people face.
- **Respecting** people, thinking biblically, and finding solutions to complex issues.
- Showing grace by finding the **good** in others and seeing their potential to be Christ followers.



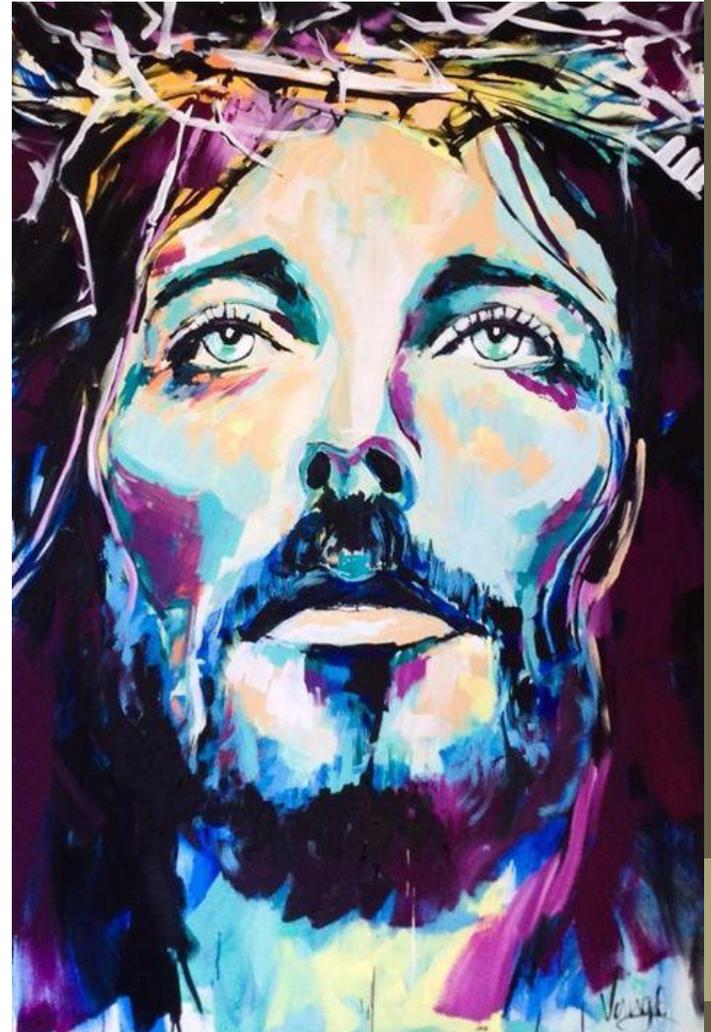
Living Missionally

- People do not care how much you know until they know how much you . . .



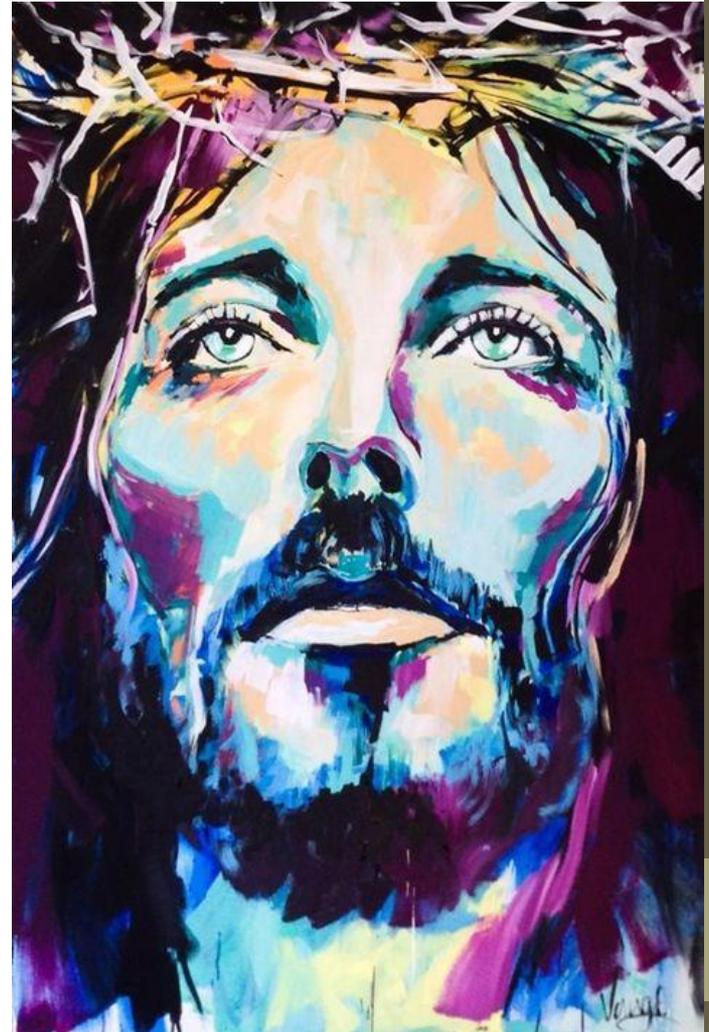
Living Missionally

- People do not care how much you know until they know how much you care.



Apologetics and Discipleship

- A summary of missional living:
 - Being like Jesus
- Asking questions of others requires that we know the answers for ourselves
 - Knowing what we believe
 - Knowing why we believe it
- It's all about discipleship



Homework

- Keep talking, thinking, praying about the UnChristian/Living Missionally lists.
- Scripture Memorization
 - 1 Peter 3:15
 - Matthew 22:37
- Passages to Study
 - Psalm 19
 - Romans 1:18-20
 - Romans 2:14-15
 - Acts 17:16-33



Next Week



- Doubting your doubts
- Asking Questions
- The existence of God

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