

Introduction to Apologetics

SESSION 4: HOW DOES APOLOGETICS WORK?

4B: Apologists Make Arguments

1. An argument is a way to present the case and draw a conclusion.
2. Arguments tend to be overly precise and idealized when discussing them in theory.
3. There are three basic approaches to argumentation:
 - a. Deductive arguments claim their conclusion is absolutely certain.
 - i. Everything that exists began to exist.
 - ii. The universe exists.
 - iii. Therefore, the universe began to exist.
 - b. Inductive arguments claim their conclusion is highly likely.
 - i. It is highly likely that everything that exists began to exist.
 - ii. The universe exists.
 - iii. Therefore, it is highly likely that the universe began to exist.
 - c. Abductive arguments claim their conclusion makes the most sense of the evidence.
 - i. It seems to make the most sense of the evidence to say that everything that exists began to exist.
 - ii. The universe exists.
 - iii. Therefore, it seems to make the most sense of the evidence to say that the universe began to exist.
4. Benefits of making abductive arguments in apologetics:
 - a. AA allows for a demonstration of gentleness and humility.
 - b. AA shows the most regard for the person's dignity, worth, and self-determination.
 - c. AA allows multiple layers of evidence to build so that (i.e., it is a cumulative case approach):
 - i. Implicit evidence contributes to belief.
 - ii. Explicit evidence contributes to belief.
 - iii. Apologetics is not seen as transactional but relational.
5. Examples of abductive arguments in Scripture include:
 - a. Joshua's farewell address (Joshua 23).
 - b. Jesus' meeting with the Samaritan woman (John 4).
 - c. Paul's address on Mars Hill (Acts 17).
 - d. Jude's epistle.

