

Apologetic Approaches

Many apologists of modernity engaged their cultural context using approaches they believed would resonate with their audiences—such as an appeal to rational argument as the basis for a trustworthy faith. As we shall see, the hallmark of good apologetics is an ability to engage specific audiences. Yet the modernist assumption of the primacy of rationality has now been called into question, raising difficulties for apologetic approaches based upon or appealing to it.

One of the problems here is that rationalist approaches to apologetics tend to minimize the element of mystery within the Christian faith in order to make Christianity appear more accessible to reason. Yet the Christian gospel expresses some God-given ideas that lie far beyond the capacity of the human mind to discover by itself. In trying to win arguments with particular opponents, apologists sometimes buy into the assumptions of their adversaries. A tactical advantage can easily become a strategic liability. The danger of forms of apologetics that respond to rationalism is that they often end up importing rationalism into Christianity, rather than exporting the gospel into a rationalist culture.

(Excerpt from *Mere Apologetics: How to Help Seekers & Skeptics Find Faith* by Alister E. McGrath, Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, Kindle, 2011, Page 28-29 of 200)