

An Apologetic of Thanksgiving

OUT OF THE WORD

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The word apologetics is the English rendering of the Greek word *apologia*. It is a legal term for laying out a verbal, rational defense before a tribunal. It is seen in certain passages of the Bible such as Acts 22:1-21, 1 Peter 3:15, and Jude 3. It is answering someone with a rational, organized, intelligent, systematic accounting of the Christian faith primarily verbally. Such answers as why the Bible is the Word of God, why one needs to be saved, the existence of God as creator, ruler, and redeemer, why Christ was crucified, and when, how, and why He was resurrected, and much more. Apologetics is the opposite of the Greek word *haysukeea*, which means to be silent. The Biblical mandate to engage in apologetics begins at the very top with the Head of the Church, the Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:18-20). In thinking about apologetics, and carrying out the redemptive agenda of Christ through evangelism in a post-modern, secular progressive society, I cannot help but think about Thanksgiving. Is it possible for the Christian to tie in apologetics with Thanksgiving? I do believe it could be used as a great opportunity to engage the worldview of those outside of Christ. The apostle Paul says in *Romans 1:18-19*, “*For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness because that which is known about God is evident within them, for God made it evident to them*” Paul is describing why God’s righteousness is outlined in the gospel, he shows why it necessary to get right with God because God’s wrath is set against those who ignore His moral Law or suppress the truth. A secular man no matter how moral left to himself is destined to eternal hell unless divine grace is received. Continuing to reject God will only go from bad to worse. Three times Paul says the doom recurs: “*wherefore God...gave them up...*” (verses 24, 26, 28). Paul says, from the creation of the world God’s works have been seen but they refuse to acknowledge Him, thus becoming fools (Rom. 1:20). Man can contemplate God’s works, and man can grasp enough of God’s nature to know that there is a *Moral Law Giver* to whom they are accountable to. Instead, they exchange the glory for idols and wickedness. In the words of C.S. Lewis, “the lost enjoy forever the horrible freedom they have demanded and are therefore self-enslaved.” The next verse says, “*For even though they knew God, they **did not honor Him as God or give thanks**, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened.*” (Rom. 1:21). So, my question is this...How is it possible or logical for a pagan one who willfully suppresses the truth in unrighteousness to even claim to celebrate Thanksgiving and claim to be thankful? When in reality their actual disposition is one of ignoring God, refusing to honor God, nor giving thanks to God? The apologetic is this.... the empirical evidence of any pagan celebrating thanksgiving is proof of two intelligent defenses: **Rational defense number 1**- Their gathering for Thanksgiving is proof of God’s existence. If truth doesn’t exist, therefore God doesn’t exist. Then how can you make any truth claim to petition to be thankful? Instead, truth does exist... you’re suppressing the truth that you know exists, refusing to honor God, and not giving proper thanks (Rom. 1:21). **Rational defense number 2**- Their gathering for Thanksgiving is proof you have been made in the image of God. Proof that you did not evolve, but instead that there is a Law written in your heart (Rom. 2:14-16). Proof that the conscience is bearing witness and these suppressing thoughts are accusing you of personal guilt, because of sin. The image of God in us is tainted with sin (Gen. 3) and must come to Christ for restoration (Hebrews 5:9, Mark 16:16, 2 Cor. 5:17). Thanksgiving is linked to truth and truth is only in Jesus Christ (John 14:6, 17:17). Christ died for the ungodly (Rom. 5:6). Let us be thankful to God for Christ! For the true Christian Jesus is representing him in heaven, may we reflect

him on earth, while Jesus pleads my cause, may I show forth his beauty and praise! **Happy Thanksgiving.**