

# APOLOGETICS

**Apologetics is a word that is often misunderstood, as if it means ‘apologising’ for one’s faith. The word, however, derives its meaning from the Greek *apologia*, meaning a reasoned defence. In the Bible, apologetics is synonymous with evangelism. Below is an artistic interpretation of Paul preaching to the community in Athens; you can read this story in Acts 17:16-34.**



**Southern Cross’ key verse for engaging in apologetics is:**

*But in your hearts, set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer (apologia) to everyone who asks you for the reason for the hope that you have, but do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience. 1 Peter 3:15-16*

Southern Cross wants to equip you to be able to engage in a reasoned defence of your faith. We will do this by isolating a **Key Statement**; this is a position or understanding that presents a challenge to our faith. We will then formulate a **Key Response**; this is a sound bite to provoke further discussion that can enable you to integrate relevant **Key Content** from our sermons. *Remember we value being open minded and humble regarding our own knowledge and kind towards others.*

The **Oxford Centre for Christian Apologetics** states:

“...Today, the need for sound apologetics has arguably never been greater. Authors such as Richard Dawkins, Sam Harris and Christopher Hitchens continue to top the best seller lists and are already influencing a whole new generation of thinkers to reject God ‘out of hand’. The OCCA hopes to equip Christians to defend the Christian faith against such misunderstandings and misrepresentations, on both a popular and an academic level, offering a counter-claim to modern-day secularism...”

Alister McGrath is the President of OCCA, you can visit their website at: <http://www.theocca.org>

They run a variety of courses in Apologetics from one day, one week, eight weeks or a year.