

## **Lecture 4-Athens & Jerusalem: The Apologists**

*I am incurably convinced that the object of opening the mind, as of opening the mouth, is to shut it again on something solid.*

G. K. Chesterton

*But in your hearts set apart 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.*

*1 Peter 3: 15*

### **Assigned Reading**

*The Story of Christianity*—chapter 7

### **Key Terms**

Apology, H. Richard Niebuhr, “In the world but not of the world”

### **Objectives**

- Discuss the purpose of the writings of the apologists
- Identify who the apologists are
- Explain and apply the different perspectives to the question, “What is the relationship between Christ and culture?”

### **Class Prayer**

*“Shepherd of tender youth, guiding in love and truth*

*Through devious ways: Christ, our triumphant King,*

*We come Thy Name to sing;*

*Hither our children bring, to shout Thy praise.”*

*“Thou art our holy Lord, the all-subduing Word,*

*Healer of strife: Thou didst thyself abase,*

*That from sin’s deep disgrace,*

*Thou mightest save our race, and give us life.”*

*“So now and till we die, sound we Thy praises high,*

*And joyful sing: infants, and the glad throng,*

*Who to Thy church belong,*

*Unite to swell the song to Christ our King. Amen.”*

*Clement of Alexandria*

## **Athens & Jerusalem: The Apologists**

### **I. Christianity and Judaism**

#### **A. New Testament**

#### **B. Justin Martyr’s *Answer to Trypho* (c. 160)**

##### **1. Justin’s testimony**

##### **2. Witness of the Old Testament**

### **II. Christianity and Paganism**

#### **A. Some early apologists**

##### **1. Epistle to Diognetus**

##### **2. Octavius of Minicius Felix**

##### **3. Justin Martyr’s first and second apology**

#### **B. Two approaches**

1. Clement of Alexandria and Origen (Answer to Celsus )
  2. Tertullian
- III. Christ and Culture (H. Richard Niebuhr)
- A. Christ *against* culture
  - B. The Christ *of* culture
  - C. Christ *above* culture
  - D. Christ and culture *in Paradox*
  - E. Christ *the transformer* of culture

Question for Consideration

1. Who were those who agreed with Clement?
2. Who were the early apologists? What was their task?

For Further Study

Niebuhr, H. Richard. *Christ and Culture*. 1951.

A classic on the relationship of Christianity and culture that raises almost as many questions as it answers.

Read the beautiful Epistle to Diognetus (found in numerous sources including *A Treasury of Evangelical Writings*, ed. David Otis Fuller, pp. 7-14). How does the writer explain the difference between pagan and Jewish worship? How does he understand grace? What is missing? Notice especially the moving section in the last two paragraphs on page 9 (and 10). How does the writer relate knowledge and life in the last paragraph? Why is this important?