

Avoiding the Wall of Antagonism

by Ray Comfort

Effective evangelism comes not from arguing with the intellect, but from addressing the conscience and using the Law to prepare the heart for the Gospel.

Scripture: Colossians 1:21

Topics: "Evangelism Methods", "Conscience And Law"

Description

Ray Comfort emphasizes the importance of using the Law in evangelism, highlighting how arguments from the sinner's intellect can create a barrier to accepting God. He explains that the human mind is naturally at enmity with God and encourages speaking directly to the conscience, which is God's ally and testifies for Him. Comfort shares a powerful testimony of a Catholic individual whose heart was prepared for the Gospel through the use of the Law, leading to a life-changing experience and a desire to share the message with others.

Transcript

The forsaking of the Law's use in evangelism has made the Church think that apologetics are our great weapon in the battle for the salvation of the world. One could make a convincing case for that thought in what we call "the age of enlightenment," when issues such as evolution and atheism have made these times unique in history. However, arguments come from the sinner's intellect. The ungodly mind is like a brick wall. It has been built to keep God out. It is at enmity with Him. It refuses to bow to the Law of God--"Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Romans 8:7). The human mind lays up arguments against God, so if you stay in that area you can expect a vicious battle. It is the mind that the Bible sites as the place of hostility--"And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now has He reconciled" (Colossians 1:21, italics added). This wall of antagonism is hard and immovable, so make it a habit of going around it. Learn to speak directly to the conscience. This is good news. It means that we can be effective in our Christian witness without having to learn how to pronounce "Australopithecus afarensis" or define the fossil record, or know the age of the earth. When you address the conscience, these things become non-issues. It is that part of human nature that isn't an enemy of God. The conscience is God's ally. It doesn't speak against the Law of God; it speaks for it. It is the work of the Law written on their heart. It "[bears] witness" (Romans 2:15). It testifies for God. It is the trustworthy witness who points out the guilty party in the courtroom. Its mouth presents evidence of the Law's transgression. It is because of what it does that we should make room for it to speak as quickly as we can. If we want to win our case we must

bring out our star witness and put it on the stand to give it voice. We want to stop the mouth of the criminal, and that's what the lawful use of the Law does (see Romans 3:19). It condemns the guilty and drives him to give up his defense, so that he will be forced to look solely to the judge for mercy.

How wonderful it is (when trying to talk with someone about the things of God) not to be thrown into panic when someone responds with, "I'm a Roman Catholic." Before I understood the use of the Law I would think, "Horrors! Now I'm going to have to deal with transubstantiation, Mariology, papal infallibility, the mass, etc." Not so now. I simply say, "Would you consider yourself to be a good person?" I do the same with a Protestant. I do the same with a Moslem, an intellectual, an evolutionist, an atheist, etc. It is simply a matter of moving from the intellect to the conscience (amazing as it sounds, although many Catholics have heard much about Jesus, the Cross, sin, and salvation, most have never heard the true gospel). Our mandate is to preach the Gospel to every creature (Mark 16:15), and it is the Gospel that is the "power of God unto salvation" (Romans 1:16). Once the Law is manifest the usual rational arguments that so often cloud the issue become irrelevant.

Kirk shared the teaching on the use of the Law one morning at a large church in Ohio. A few days later we received an email which shows the power of the Law to prepare the heart for the Gospel:

"I just heard you speak this morning...I'm a Catholic...have been all my life...I can't even begin to tell you how much your message affected me...I've been quite speechless all day long, which if you knew me, you'd know that I'm rarely quiet. It's been a good quiet because I am so humbled all of a sudden. I want to 'take the ball and run with it', as you put it. However, I'm confused. You see, I've never been hit that hard in any Catholic service I've ever attended. How do you minister to Catholics???? I can tell you that most of them don't want to hear anything unless it's from a priest. I could be wrong and hope that I am...but I'm full of questions on what to do next... Every one needs to hear what I heard this morning. I'm just so full of.....well, I don't even know how to describe it. My life has been changed since this morning. I can't thank you enough. I'm going to end here and start reading my book I purchased this morning!! Thanks again and God bless you!!!"

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