

What We Believe... Why We Believe It

By
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Practical Apologetics—Part IV

This is the fourth and final installment in our practical apologetics series. Up to now, we've covered what Bibles to use, the things you need to know about the Bible, the sources you need for Catholic Church history, and the closely related topic of early Christian patristics.

We'll finish up this series by explaining how you can know (and thus be ready for) what your opponent will say before he or she even says it.

In order to combat detractors, you need to know what the other side is saying. The main source for all the anti-Catholic arguments you will hear come from *Roman Catholicism* by Loraine Boettner¹, whether our detractors realize it or not. Most of them have never even heard of this book that famed apologist Karl Keating calls the anti-Catholic bible, but you can rest assured the vast majority of arguments against the Church come from this book. So you need to get and read *Roman Catholicism*. I remember reading it back in the '90s and laughing as I read. Boettner certainly didn't do his research before writing it!

Anyway, it is definitely available on Amazon. It'll probably cost you twenty or twenty-five bucks, but it's worth it. Getting your hands on anti-Catholic resources is tantamount to a war general getting his hands on the enemy's battle plans.

Keating laments in his modern classic book on apologetics, *Catholicism and Fundamentalism*, that no one has ever written a refutation of *Roman Catholicism* because it would take too much effort to write. That was a clarion call to me! At this writing, I'm working on a multi-volume refutation of Boettner's book. I'm calling it *Refuting Roman Catholicism*, and I'm hoping that with a title like that there will be a number of Protestants who pick it up.

Another source is called *The Two Babylons* by Alexander Hislop. The subtitle is "*Proof that Roman Catholic beliefs came from pagan Babylonian religion*". It doesn't prove that at all. In fact, the whole book is laughable. Seriously. I laughed when I first read it.

But I didn't tell you about *The Two Babylons* by Alexander Hislop so you would buy it. I told you about it in order to tell you about the hugely destructive book it inspired, one you should get. It's called *Babylon Mystery Religion* by Ralph Woodrow, and you can get it on Amazon.

Most anti-Catholic rants are motivated by bigotry and bigotry alone, pure and simple. The only sincerity such people have is the sincerity of their hatred for the Roman Catholic Church. However, from time to time you'll run across someone who is sincere in the things he believes about the Catholic Church, wrong though they may be. One such person is Ralph Woodrow. I

¹ Loraine Boettner is, believe it or not, a man, so expect this book to be masculinely aggressive.

rank what he wrote in *Babylon Mystery Religion* as the lunatic fringe, but he really believed what he wrote when he wrote it. His sincerity shows in his honesty.

I don't know who got to Woodrow about the Catholic Church, but he completely rethought and re-researched his position. What he did then I've never seen an anti-Catholic author do. He wrote another book called *The Babylon Connection?* to completely refute *Babylon Mystery Religion*. Whether he ever became a Catholic, I do not know, but I laud him for an honesty and integrity seldom seen among anti-Catholic writers. Despite that Woodrow refuted his own Catholic book, it's one you should read nonetheless.

Perhaps the one person to promote hatred of the Catholic Church more than anyone else in the twentieth century was Jack Chick, founder of Chick Publications, who died in 2016. I'm sure when he stood before God for his judgement and discovered the truth, he said, "You're kidding, right, Lord?"

Anyway, I do recommend getting his little shirt pocket cartoon tracts and reading them, because they have been so spiritually destructive over the years. True enough, Chick is the lunatic fringe, but you'd be amazed by the number of people he's taken from the Church with these tracts. Now there are only eight of these illustrated tracts on anti-Catholic topics, but I began reading them as a teenager when there were a lot more. These tracts have especially virulent attacks on Mary, the Eucharist, and the priesthood, but reading them will help you know what to expect when folks you know attack the Church. They're only 37¢ each, I think, so they won't break the bank.

I'll close this with telling you a few "dos and don'ts". The first "do" is to learn your faith inside and out. You can't defend what you don't know.

Now for a don't: Never, ever, never get personal or condescending in your apologetical arguments. Also, never try to win an argument; you can't. Anyone biased enough against the Church to actually learn an attack already has his/her mind made up and won't listen to you anyway. Besides, you're not really trying to win against your opponent, but rather those who are probably listening in. After all, these discussions rarely done in private venues. So always remember that, more often than not, other people are listening, and they are who you are trying to reach. I've made more converts and reverts that way!

Okay, that's about it! Now that we have the practical apologetics out of the way, it's time to have begin having fun with actual apologetical topics. The first one is something that probably doesn't keep you awake at night.

I'm a firm believer there are two things every Catholic should have to be able to prove. One of those things proving that sacred Scripture is divinely inspired. When you can do that, it's so much easier and explain What We Believe... Why We Believe It.

Got questions? Visit JoeSixpackAnswers.com for all your Catholic questions. If you can't find an answer, go to the "Ask Joe" page and ask me directly. And remember to put your name and email in the form on the home page so you can get a free email course to learn things about Catholicism you never knew before. You'll also get invitations to register for the free weekly webinars I host every week.