

WELCOME to a 7 week Course sponsored by
Dallas Willard Ministries & Jesus College



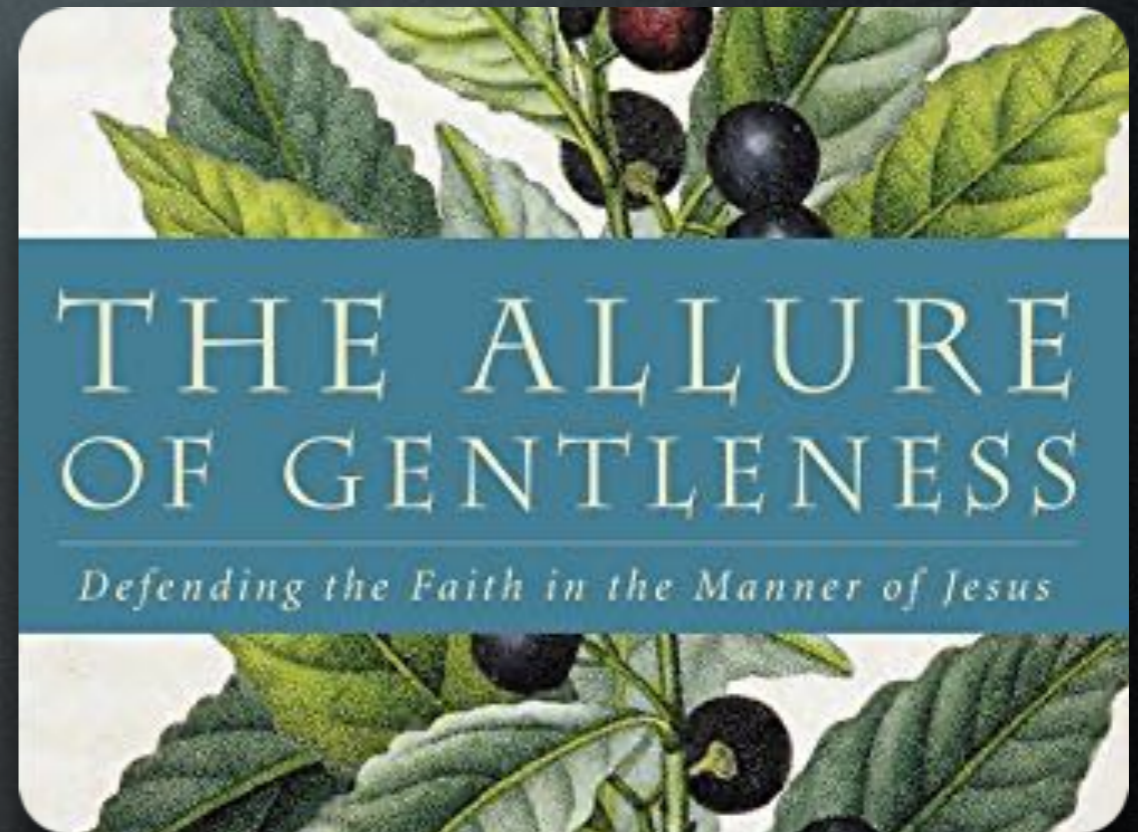
Session 1 Review

Apologetics is a helping ministry with knowledge of the truth of Jesus lived with Jesus & like Jesus in His Kingdom!

Session 2 Review

Apologetics is for everyone to build a context of faith in the reality of the Kingdom of Heaven granting peace & strength in any situation, including and especially in suffering, prompting people to ask,

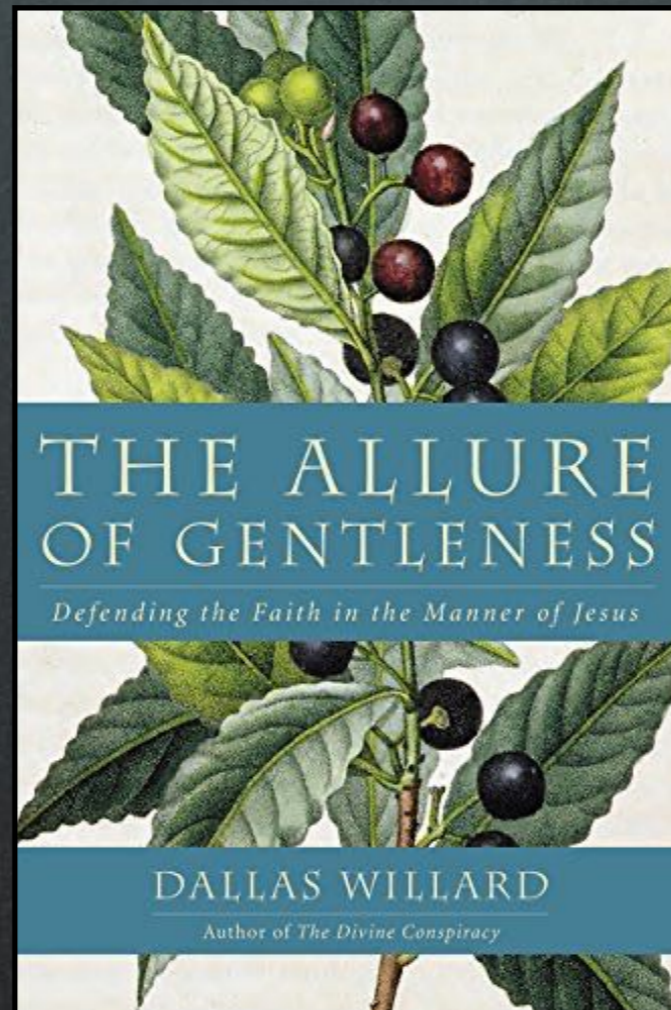
“Why are you so hopeful?”



THE ALLURE OF GENTLENESS

Session 3

Chapter 3 - “*Biblical Apologetics*”



A BIBLICAL APOLOGETIC

The best use of our natural faculties of thought in submission to the Holy Spirit to remove doubts and problems that hinder a trustful, energetic participation in a life of personal relationship with God.



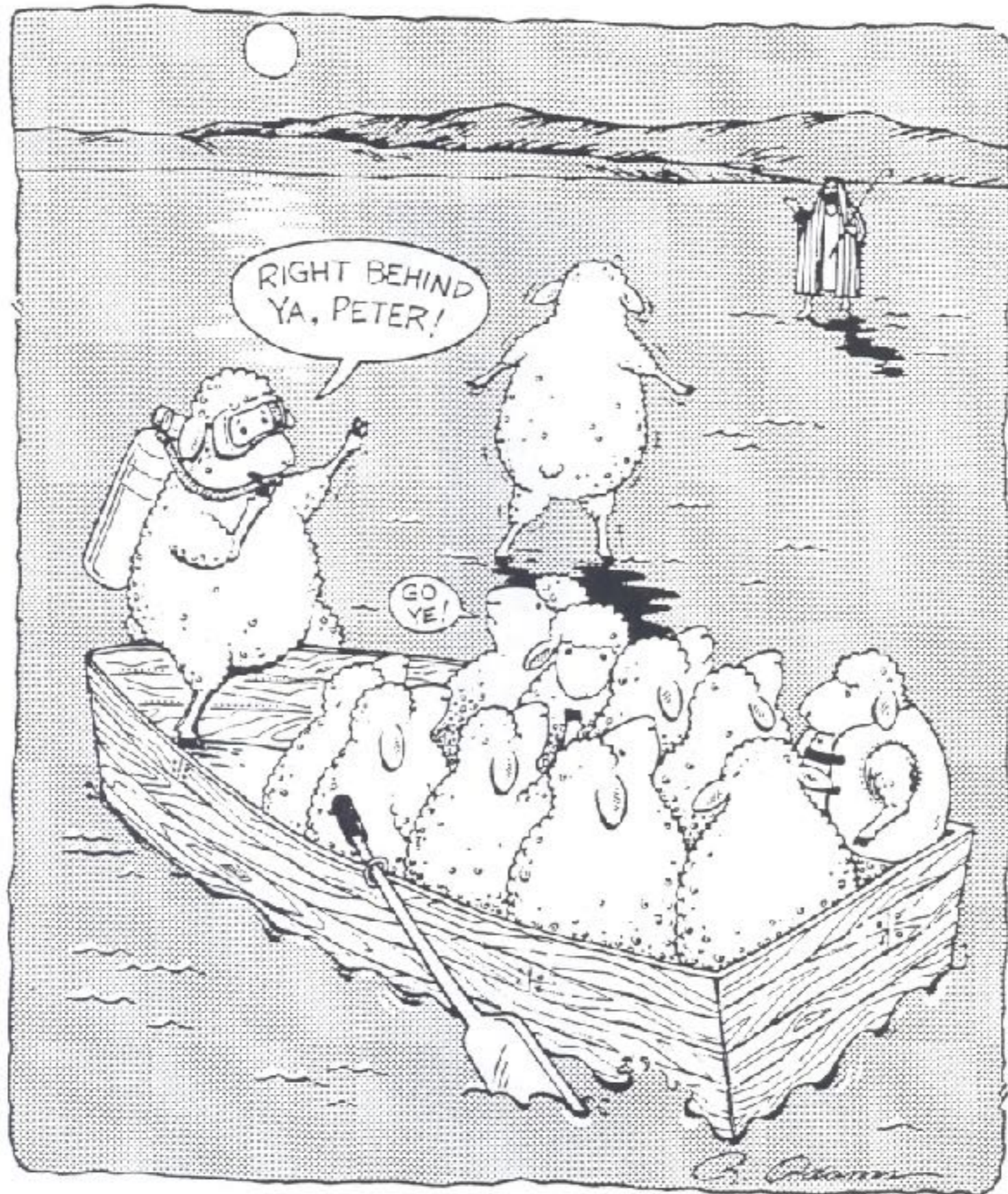
(39...9, 51, 146)



FAITH – Confidence

When we are halfhearted in our faith, we are halfhearted in our thinking. And the halfheartedness defeats the whole project.

(39)



YE... (OF LITTLE FAITH)

“Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.”

Colossians 2:8 (KJV)

“Isn't there something vaguely sinful about thinking?” (39)

“Philosophy & Vain Deceit” ≠ All philosophy is vain deceit.

Any more than warnings against drinking and driving means it is wrong to drive.



The Warning: Knowledge puffs up

When those [of pride or self-defense] get involved in Christian apologetics, they really do a lot of damage.

The best answer to philosophy and vain deceit is good philosophy and good thinking in the Spirit of Christ.

Philosophy is an attempt to figure out the best way to live, what the best ways to be and to do are.

[Philosophers] used reason to try to arrive at comprehensive understanding of these basic issues faced by all human beings.

(40-41)



Was Jesus a Philosopher? You bet He was!

We can use understanding without leaning on it.

Trust God...and use your head!

Present all (legs, brains, everything) to God as a living sacrifice and ask Him to inhabit it and use it. If you don't understand that, you can't understand the content and the method of the New Testament, which is to go with God and think, preach, teach, reach out to people, and minister to them generously with the truth that you have received.



(41-42)

FAITH & THINKING

*“Faith and thought belong together,
and believing is impossible without thinking.”*

John Stott, Your Mind Matters

*“But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is
alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will
he not much more clothe you—you of little faith?”*

Dr. Yeshua ben-Joseph of Nazareth

Jesus is asking you to think logically.

Jesus' method of teaching was always to get people to think and to lead them along.

(42-43)



THE ESSENCE of WORRY

“The whole trouble with the man of little faith is that he does not think. He allows circumstances to bludgeon him.

Christian faith is essentially thinking,

*“...look at the birds,
...look at the lilies of the field,
...consider them.”*



Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones

THE ESSENCE of WORRY (continued)

“The trouble with the person of little faith is that, instead of controlling his own thought, his thought is being controlled by something else. This is the essence of worry...That is not thought, that is the absence of thought, a failure to think.”

Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones

(43)



The Nature of Biblical Apologetics

THE ROLE of REASON

“Reason” (def.) – The human ability to see relationship between real or possible fact and other real or possible facts. Such that if you have the one, you have the other or you don’t have the other.

Jesus the Philosopher & Teacher

Matthew 6:30 – “If God so clothes the grass of the field...”

Premise #1 – God cares for the grass.

Premise #2 – Aren’t you worth as much as the grass?

Conclusion – God cares for you.

Please forgive me,
but we need to be unmistakably clear...
apologetic work uses reason.

(44)



Reason functions as the basis of responsibility before God precisely because of its ability to serve in the instigation, nurture, and correction of faith.

It provides adequate grounds to support a right worship of God.

(45)



We know that reason alone can never begin to exhaust the depths of God's nature and works. Personal relationships should never be reduced to one person deducing the truth about another from certain clues. Self-disclosure to another as a unique individual is always the main part of any personal relationship.



(46)

The human activity of reasoning is an indispensable part of the foundation of our faith.
...a primary instrument in our hands,
...our part in the ministry of the gospel,
...our task to perfect it and to use it.

(46)



CHRISTIAN APOLOGETICS IS NOT...

- 1.) An Attempt to Prove I am Right (46)
- 2.) Intellectual Bullying (50)
- 3.) Christian Evidences (51)



CHRISTIAN APOLOGETICS IS NOT...



1.) An attempt to prove I am right.

“I am saved because I’m right.”

No. You’re right because you are saved. You got saved because of the grace of God...it turned out what you were believing was right.

Not many people want to go to “Right Church”,
but we’ll gladly go to “Grace Church”.

The value of being right is that it enables you to deal effectively with reality and integrate your life with reality appropriately.

Pop Quiz*

“Why should we make these efforts and invest ourselves in removing doubt?”

* This will not count toward your semester grade.

Pop Quiz

Q — “Why should we make these efforts and invest ourselves in removing doubt?”

A — “Because people are incredibly valuable.”



One of the things you lose when you engage in defensive argument is your capacity to deal with other people as precious, eternal, valuable souls, persons whom God has, as we like to say, a wonderful plan for, for both time and eternity.

Help people deal with their pain, suffering, doubts.

(49)



Is apologetics “defending” the faith against challenges, critical attacks, scrutinizing questions or the “vindication” against non-Christians?

No. I’m not here to defend the Christian faith.
The Christian faith defends me.

There’s a time to be very strong in your affirmation, but there is no need for defensiveness.

Help people who are having real trouble in accepting and believing.

(49)



CHRISTIAN APOLOGETICS IS NOT...

2.) Intellectual Bullying

I have never seen a person helped by being belittled.

I want to be able to put my arm around that person's shoulder and say, *"We are looking for truth together, and if you can show me where I am wrong, I'll take your side."*

(49-50)



“Doubt is a terrible thing.”

Apologetics is serious work to help people
- Christians and non-Christians -
resolve issues of doubt.

(51)

CHRISTIAN APOLOGETICS IS NOT...

3.) Christian Evidences

(def.) Showing Christianity to be true,
a legitimate enterprise.

If you try to do Christian evidences with most people who need the ministry of apologetics, in about forty-five seconds their eyes will roll back or glaze over as if they're about to fall asleep. And they might as well be.



The goal of the ministry of apologetics is to answer existential questions and quandaries that hurting people face.

Their Q & Q — *Questions & Quandaries*

Here's a big one — Why pray*?

(51)

* Chapter 7 - LIVING and ACTING with GOD (151)



The Christian attitude in apologetic work consists in three things:

1st — We are confident in God and His truth.

2nd — We are humble, generous and open.

3rd — We have a true desire to lovingly serve.

—> What other religion has John 3:16?

“We’re not nervous and God’s not nervous either.”



(52-53)

“And the Lord’s servant must not be quarrelsome but kindly to everyone, an apt teacher, patient, correcting opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant that they will repent and come to know the truth, and that they may escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will.” II Timothy 2:24-26

Jesus - “I am gentle” Matthew 11:29

Paul - “I appeal by the gentleness of Christ” II Co. 10:1

James - “show works done in gentleness” 3:13

Peter - “defend with gentleness” I Peter 3:16

Q&C

Your Questions & Comments are welcome!

(Use the Q&A on the bottom of your Zoom screen)



Q&A

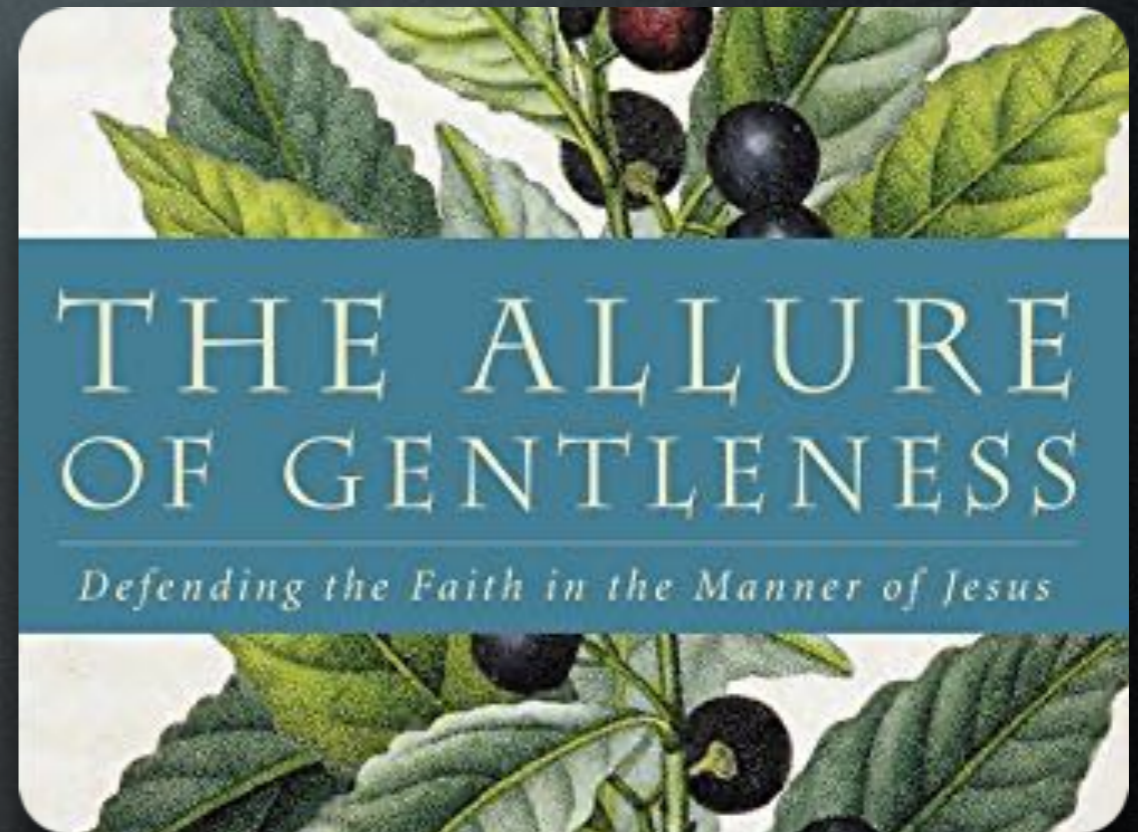
Session 3 Summary

Biblical Apologetics is...

...the full use of reason to help people deal with serious, difficult doubt...

...not proving we are right, intellectual bullying, nor Christian evidences, rather...

...confidence in God from humble, generous, open, loving servants.



Meditation — *II Timothy 2:24-26*

V-I-M in your next 10,000 minutes...

VISION — How much do reason and facts play in my view of the Kingdom of God?

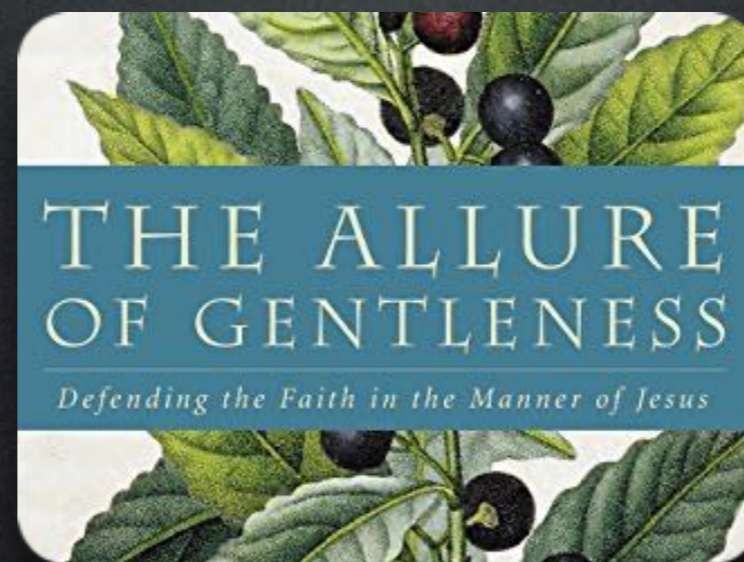
I — How important is it for me to be right?

M — What discipline will I practice to foster humility, generosity or service?



Next - Session 4 of 7

Chapter 4 - Faith & Reason
(pp. 55-82)



May you find in
your next 10,000
minutes incredibly
valuable people you
can put your arm
around and
together pursue
truth with Jesus.

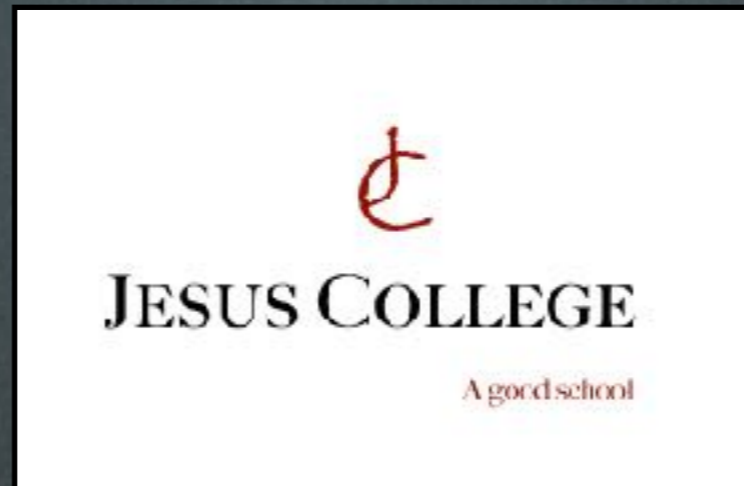
Doug



THE SCHOOL of KINGDOM LIVING

Information...Registration — JohnC@dwillard.org





Apprentice to Master Love — //Nouns
“A Student of the Superior Benefactor”

Apprentice to Master Love — //Verbs
“Training to be proficient in willing the good”

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