

# Preface

|| fizzles out || deuteronomy ||

## Classical Apologetics — Preface

Christianity is rational. But because it provokes passion, devotion, prayer, worship, and aspirations to obedience, its purely rational element can easily be submerged or concealed from view. It has been called variously a “religion,” a “way of life,” an “experience,” a “faith,” and an “ideology.” That Christianity involves more, much more than rationality, is evident. That it is eminently rational is not always evident.

Throughout this work, the authors, John Gerstner, Arthur Lindsley, and R. C. Sproul, affirm the *primacy of the mind* in the Christian faith. To suggest the primacy of the mind is outrageous to some, particularly to those who equate rationality with rationalism. We also affirm the *primacy of the heart*. The scope of this volume focuses primarily on the rational aspect of Christianity. Our emphasis on this part, however, must not be misconstrued as a summary of the whole.

But how can we speak of two primacies? Must not the one hold ultimate primacy over the other or at least be considered the *primus inter pares*? We take no refuge in dialectics but speak of two different kinds of primacies. The mind has a primacy of *order*, while the heart has a primacy of *importance*. By this we mean that one can have no meaningful love or passion for that which is utterly unintelligible to the mind. Man is so constituted that his heart is to follow his head, just as love blossoms in the fertile ground of understanding. Though the mind is first in temporal and logical order, it does not settle our standing before God. Christianity recognizes the real possibility of a cognitive understanding of doctrine and philosophy which is held captive by a cold and recalcitrant heart. To have a lucid understanding of the things of God without a heart burning with affection toward Him is to be exposed all the more to His judgment. It betrays the most deadly form of schizophrenia. On the other hand, to be flowing with love toward Him, even when confused or less than precise about doctrine, is to be numbered among His children. Were we to be forced to choose between mind and heart, between reason and faith we would say, “to the gallows with reason,” that we not miss the kingdom. But such would be a false dilemma, an illegitimate rupture of that which God has joined together, each enjoying its particular kind of primacy.

We affirm reason without rationalism, personal love without personalism, faith without fideism. It is because we believe that the capacity of the heart to increase its passion for God is inseparably bound up with the increase of the understanding of the character of God that we care so much for the intellectual dimension of faith. The more we know of God the greater is our capacity to love Him.

This book is divided into three parts. Section I is a prolegomenon dealing with the problems and method of apologetics. Section II develops the theistic proofs and the authority of Scripture. Section III is given over to a critique of presuppositionalism in apologetics, particularly with reference to the thought of Cornelius Van Til.

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During the preparation of this volume, the authors have been in dialogue

with Christianity is rational. But because it provokes passion, devotion, prayer, worship, and aspirations to obedience, its purely rational element can easily be submerged or concealed from view. It has been called variously a “religion,” a “way of life,” an “experience,” a “faith,” and an “ideology.” That Christianity involves more, much more than rationality, is evident. That it is eminently rational is not always evident.

在这部作品中，作者约翰-格斯特纳（John Gerstner）、亚瑟-林兹利（Arthur Lindsley）和R-C-斯普劳尔（R. C. Sproul）都肯定了思维，在基督教信仰中的首要地位。暗示思维的首要地位，对某些人来说是很离谱的，特别是对那些，将理性等同于理性主义的人来说。我们也肯定了心的首要地位。本卷的范围主要集中在基督教的理性方面。然而，我们对这部分的强调不能被误解为是对整体的总结。

但我们怎么能说有两个首要地位呢？难道一个人就不能对另一个人拥有最终的首要地位，或者至少被认为是相互之间的首要地位？我们没有在辩证法中寻求庇护，而是谈论两种不同的首要地位。思维有在顺序上的首要地位，而心灵有重要性上的首要地位。我们的意思是，一个人不可能对思维完全无法理解的东西产生有意义的爱或激情。人是这样构成的，他的心要跟随着他的头脑，就像爱情，是在理解的沃土上开花结果一样。虽然头脑在时间和逻辑上是第一位的，但它并不能解决我们在上帝面前的地位。基督教认识到，对教义和哲学的认知理解确实有可能被一颗冷漠而顽固的心所俘虏。如果对上帝的事情有清晰的理解，却没有一颗对他充满爱意的心，就更容易受到他的审判。这暴露了最致命的精神分裂症的形式。另一方面，即使在对教义感到困惑或不那么精确的情况下，也要对他充满爱意，这样才能成为他的孩子。如果我们被迫在思想和心灵之间，在理性和信仰之间做出选择，我们会说：“让理性上绞架”，这样我们就不会错过神的国。但这将是一个错误的两难境地，是上帝将其结合在一起的不合法的破裂，每一个，都享有其特殊的首要地位。

我们肯定理性而非理性主义，肯定个人的爱而非个人主义，肯定信仰而非信仰主义。正是因为我们相信，心对上帝的热情的增加与对上帝的性格的理解的增加，是密不可分的，所以我们非常关心信仰的知识层面。我们对上帝的了解越多，我们爱他的能力就越强。

本书分为三部分。第一部分是一个序言，涉及护教学的问题和方法。第二部分发展了有神论的证明和圣经的权威。第三部分是对护教学中，预设条件主义 presuppositionalism 的批判，特别是对Cornelius Van Til的思想的批判。

with representatives of persons from various apologetic traditions. We owe an especially heavy debt to Professor John Frame for his prolonged dialogue over several months which significantly sharpened our understanding of Vantillian apologetics.

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