

## Apologetics Session Five - ETC chapter 10

Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest you be like him yourself. Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own eyes. Proverbs 26:4-5 ESV

### The Relationship of Apologetics and Evangelism

*"Evangelism is directed more toward the proclamation of the judgement to come and the good news of salvation in the death and resurrection of Christ...Apologetics, however, is more concerned with the justification of these claims."* ETC, pg. 83

Both evangelism and apologetics assumes that there is a basic willingness on the part of the unbeliever to hear and discuss the claims of Christ. We are not to throw pearls before swine (Matt. 7:6). ETC, 82

### The two-fold justification of the Christian faith

The fool has rejected the fear of God and thus the wisdom for which God alone is the source. In answering the fool we must never embrace their foolishness by abandoning our commitment to total dependence upon God's revelation (Prov. 26:4). Yet in making our defense of the faith we must also demonstrate the bankruptcy of the unbeliever's denial by using the futility of unbelief against them (Prov. 26:5).

Proverbs 26:4: Argument by Truth

*"Argument by truth is basically answering the non-Christian's objections and questions about the credibility of Christian claims from the Christian or biblical perspective...Whether or not we actually begin with argument by truth in every situation is unimportant, but we should be certain never to forsake it for this sort of argument is essential to biblical apologetics."* ETC, 86

#### Three Steps to the Argument by Truth

1. Admit that your answers stem from your trust in Christ as Lord and Savior.
2. Give the Christian evidence or the explanation of your ignorance on a particular issue. If you do not know the answer due to your finiteness, you can still respond that if an answer is to be found it must be done by dependence on the revelation of God. **Example: you may not be able to answer a particular question regarding Carbon-14 dating; but you do know that God created the universe in six 24 hour days as recorded in Genesis chapters 1-2.** If you do know the answer to the unbeliever's objections to Christianity give it, and support your answer based upon the evidence.
  - A. Biblical Evidence [using "Biblical logic" and direct statements from Scripture]
  - B. Evidence from the external world [interpreted in dependence upon God]
  - C. Evidence from personal experience [i.e. our changed life, the faithfulness of God etc.]
3. Show why the non-Christian will not accept the Christian view because of his sinful commitment to independence.

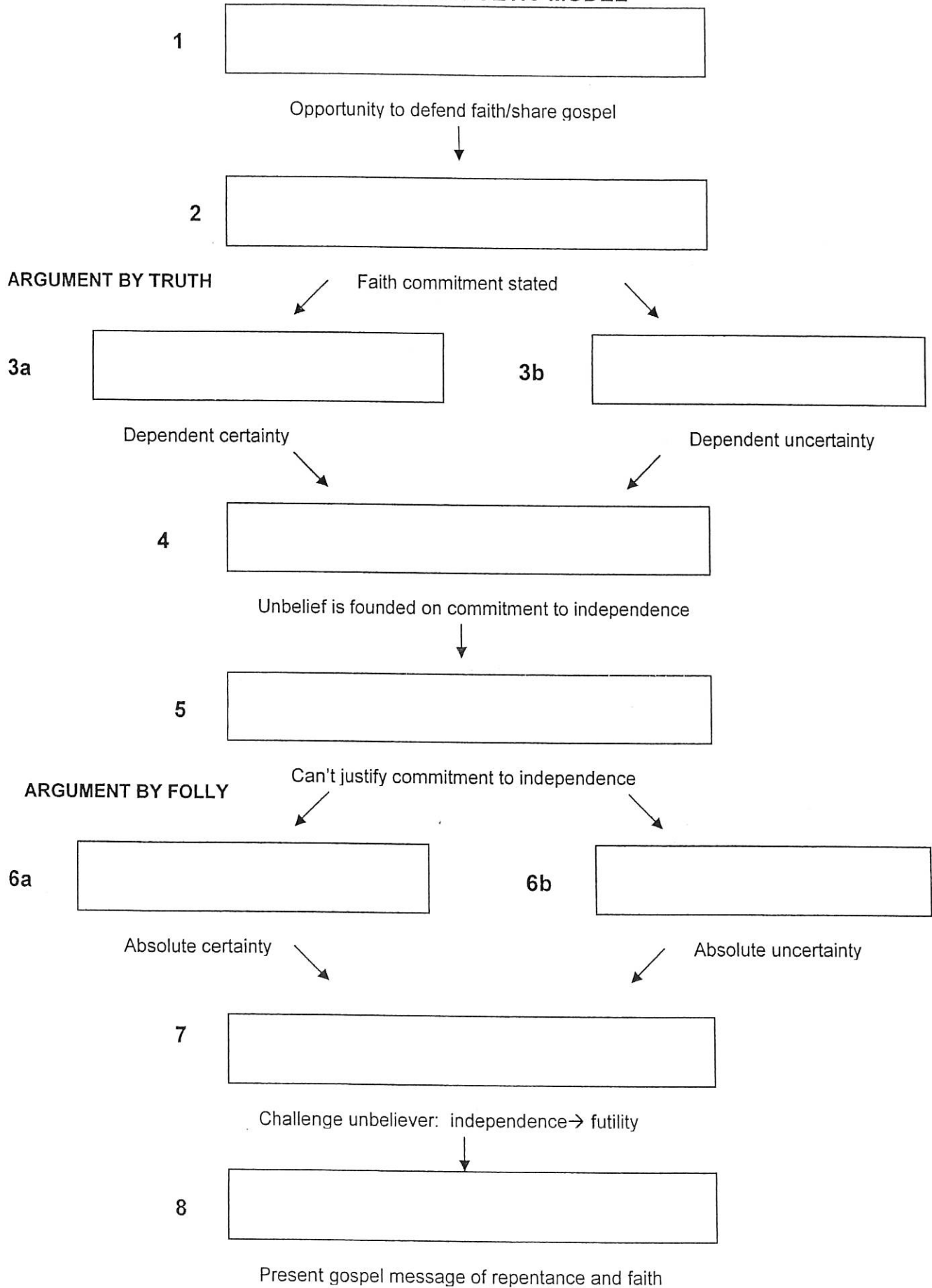
Proverbs 26:5: Argument by Folly

*"By answering the unbeliever by his own precepts and ideas the Christian apologist seeks to use the evidences and arguments acceptable to the unbeliever's system in order to remove the non-Christian's confidence in himself...non-Christian philosophy is under the judgment of God and cannot help but be self-defeating...[because] of the internal inconsistencies within the unbelieving system of thought."* ETC, pg. 92-3

#### Three Steps to the Argument by Folly

1. Having already exposed the unbeliever's commitment to independence from God, the futility of his position may be shown by asking him to justify his allegiance to independence.
2. Demonstrate the impossibility and irrationality of the unbeliever's position of either "absolute certainty" [there is no God], or "total uncertainty" [can't know if there is a god].
3. Challenge the unbeliever's commitment to independence, and confront him with the need to repent and trust Christ.

# A BIBLICAL APOLOGETIC MODEL\*



\*adapted from Every Thought Captive by Richard Pratt, 1979, p. 96.