



By

Mark McGee

I want to begin this book review by saying ‘BUY IT!’ Okay, now to the review.

First, let’s meet the author: Dr. Brian K. Morley is professor of philosophy and apologetics at the Master’s College in Santa Clarita, California. He has been a member of the Evangelical Theological Society, the Evangelical Philosophical Society, and the Society of Christian Philosophers. He is also the author of *God in the Shadows: Evil in God’s World*.

Dr. Morley’s new book is titled *Mapping Apologetics: Comparing Contemporary Approaches* (IVP Academic, 2015). He focuses on how people decide what to believe and poses the question this way: ‘How do we answer life’s most important question—the one on which everything else in life depends?’ The subject of Morley’s book is the “foundational question of apologetics, the matter of proof.”

I strongly recommend that anyone interested in the “defense of the gospel” (Philippians 1:17) purchase this book and here’s why.

Foundational Issues

Whether you are an aspiring apologist or have been involved in apologetics for decades, the structure of *Mapping Apologetics* will serve you well for the remainder of your ministry life.

Dr. Morley's method begins with an excellent Chart of Apologetic Approaches. It begins with Fideism (defined by Morley as 'a denial of apologetics') and moves through various apologetic approaches that increase emphasis on objective, independently existing evidence. Under each of the ten approaches are five important aspects of the apologetic groupings:

- Defining Characteristics
- Adherents
- Criticisms
- Epistemological starting point
- Summary

Dr. Morley explained in his Introduction that he organized the book according to a schema that he has used through much of his 25 years of teaching apologetics. That is one of the major benefits of this book: having a quarter century of apologetics' classes poured into one great reference book.

'I have also sought where possible to bring out the deeper, underlying issues separating the views, most of which are philosophical, having to do with issues such as the following: how we know, how we have certainty (and how certain we can be); the relation between faith and evidence; the possibilities of reasoning by way of deduction, induction and abduction; the role of assumptions and presuppositions; the relation between evidence and worldview; the validity of intuition as a way of knowing and its possible divine origin; and whether we can know some things without inferring them from other things we know (i.e. foundationalism). Through all this I hope to bring the issues into sharper focus so as to facilitate more constructive dialogue on the subject of apologetic methods.'" Dr. Morley, *Mapping Apologetics*, Introduction

Apologetic Methodologies

Even though Dr. Morley admits he was not able to give space to all of the primary adherents of the various apologetic approaches in the book (384 pages), he addresses some of the most important in each category. Some of the apologists that Dr. Morley wrote about in the book include Cornelius Van Til, John Frame, Alvin Plantinga, Mark Hannah, E.J. Carnell, Francis Schaeffer, Richard Swinburne, William Lane Craig, Norman Geisler, John Warwick Montgomery and Gary Habermas.

“I have tried to represent each thinker fairly, as they would describe their views. I have had the privilege of meeting and talking to most of those I have written about (including the late Greg Bahnsen), and whether by personal contact or only via their writings, I am glad to have been exposed to such brilliant minds who have worked hard on these complex issues over a lifetime.” Dr. Brian Morley, Introduction

Because *Mapping Apologetics* compares contemporary approaches, many of the apologists Dr. Morley wrote about in his book were able to respond to him:

“Dr. Morley is a careful scholar who does assiduous research and painstaking analysis.” Mark M. Hanna, Professor of Philosophy at Veritas Seminary

“*Mapping Apologetics* provides the most complete and best analysis to date of my overall apologetic approach.” John Warwick Montgomery, Distinguished Research Professor of Philosophy, Concordia University, Wisconsin; Director of the International Academy of Apologetics, Evangelism and Human Rights, Strasbourg, France

“Brian Morley shows mastery of the details of my approach, including the qualifications and nuances.” John Frame, Professor of Systematic Theology and Philosophy, Reformed Theological Seminary

“In the volume *Mapping Apologetics*, Brian Morley treats the reader to an overview and examination of several very useful apologetic methods for defending the Christian faith.” Gary R. Habermas, Distinguished Research Professor and Chair, Department of Philosophy, Liberty University and Baptist Theological Seminary

Summation

If you are new to apologetics, *Mapping Apologetics* will help you understand the many ways Christians are defending the faith around the world today. Dr. Morley's writing is so clear and thorough that you should also be able to identify the type(s) of apologetics that fits the way you think. You can use that knowledge to continue your apologetics education and broaden opportunities for impacting the lives of people God will bring across your path.

If you have been involved in apologetics for many years, *Mapping Apologetics* will help you dive deeper into your particular apologetic methodology. Dr. Morley does a great job pointing to many books and other references that will help you understand how to use your gifts in even greater ways to reach people for Christ and bring glory to God.

If you are interested in Christian apologetics, *Mapping Apologetics* is definitely a must-have book for your library.

Mapping Apologetics: Comparing Contemporary Approaches, By Brian K. Morley, InterVarsity Press, 2015

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