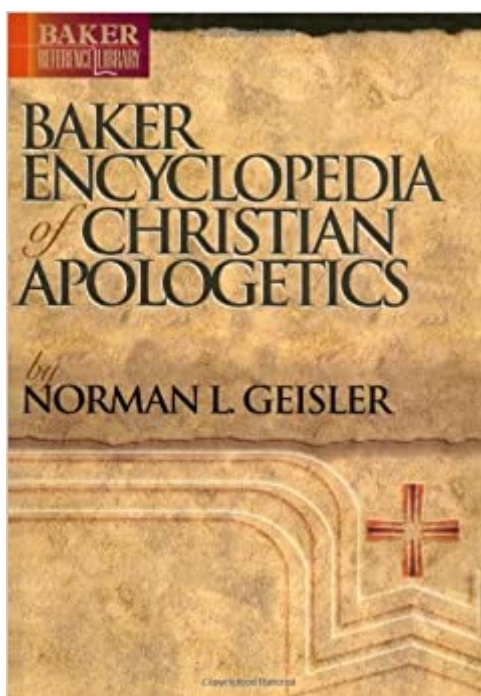


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Baker Encyclopedia Of Christian Apologetics (Baker Reference Library)



Synopsis

This comprehensive reference volume covers every key issue, person, and concept related to Christian apologetics from Anselm to Zen.

Book Information

Series: Baker Reference Library

Hardcover: 864 pages

Publisher: Baker Academic (November 1, 1998)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0801021510

ISBN-13: 978-0801021510

Product Dimensions: 10.2 x 7.4 x 2 inches

Shipping Weight: 3.7 pounds

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 87 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #282,894 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #308 in [Books > Reference > Encyclopedias & Subject Guides > Antiques & Collectibles](#) #401 in [Books > Reference > Encyclopedias & Subject Guides > Religion](#) #565 in [Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Ministry & Evangelism > Evangelism](#)

Customer Reviews

The Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics by Norman L. Geisler is the ultimate one-volume reference for Christians who seek meaningful responses to criticisms of their faith. Geisler, a professor of theology and apologetics at Southern Evangelical Seminary, is the encyclopedia's sole author. His previous books--*Answering Islam* and *When Cultists Ask*--help qualify Geisler to respond to a wide range of challenges to Christian belief. And this encyclopedia covers almost every conceivable philosophical challenge to Christianity, from "Agnosticism" to "Zen Buddhism." It also summarizes the key points regarding oft-challenged Christian doctrines and beliefs ("Adam, Historicity of," "Virgin Birth of Christ"). Each article is cleanly written and clearly organized. Indeed, Geisler's greatest talent is for logical thinking. Whether he is considering Jesus' view of the Bible or the tenets of Deism, he writes with confident assurance, so that no reader will feel lost.

Norman L. Geisler (PhD, Loyola University of Chicago) has taught at top evangelical schools for over fifty years and is distinguished professor of apologetics and theology at Veritas Evangelical Seminary in Murrieta, California. He is the author of more than seventy books, including the Baker

Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics.

This work is both important and extensive. A number of the articles are near definitive. The buyer should, however, be aware of a few shortcomings. First, this is a best of Mr. Geisler, so it's strong where he's strong (particularly if he has previously written a book on the subject), but weak on things he's not focused on in the past. Actually, it's surprising that Baker would let one person write an entire volume on apologetics in this series when other volumes have benefited from multiple authors and there are other writers available who could have written more authoritatively on some subjects, particularly the science issues. Second, it desperately needs an index. A number of issues are handled under headings which are not obvious, and sometimes over multiple separated articles that haven't been cross-referenced, making them difficult to relocate. This sometimes involves major topics (such as Postmodernism and the Brain/Mind problem) which amazingly have no separate entries, though they certainly deserve them. Advanced readers will also wish he had dealt more extensively with the entire issue of non-foundationalist apologetics, particularly since his work is so solidly foundational. Don't let any of this scare you away, however, as it's well worth the read.

In my opinion, Geisler's Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics is by far the best reference tool and study of Christian apologetics available to the church and society as a whole. I turn to this book to not only gain his insight and opinions in apologetics, but in theology, philosophy, and world religions as well—all in one volume! His bibliography alone is worth the price of this book! And his work concerning important or influential thinkers and their beliefs are well-balanced, fair, and very insightful. Indeed, this is a tremendous work and should be a required purchase for every Christian's library; its value is worth its weight in gold. If one cannot study under Dr. Geisler at Southern Evangelical Seminary in Charlotte, N.C., then studying this work is the next best thing. Because of his use of logic, years of study and experience in teaching the Scriptures, theology, and philosophy, and having multiple debates and friendships with some of the brightest scholars known world-wide, this book provides a wonderful source for those who have questions about the fundamental of the Christian faith including the existence of God, the factual resurrection of Jesus Christ, the inspiration and inerrancy (is the Bible without error?) and other subjects like the preservation of the Bible, the actual knowability of truth, infant salvation, existentialism, evolution, higher criticism, and the Person and work of the God of the Bible. He entertains questions like how can Christ be fully God yet fully man? Is Jesus Christ the only path or plan for salvation—are there more paths leading to salvation? What about the other world religions—are their claims legitimate and factual? How do other world

religions measure up to the facts of the Bible? What is relativism? Is God the originator of evil? This is not only an excellent book for theologians, pastors, teachers, and students who are attending high school, colleges, universities, and seminaries as a reference tool for both personal and professional study, but for those Christians who are experiencing doubts concerning Christian truths or who were never taught the deep truths of the Bible and factual reasons to believe what the Bible proclaims. This book is also for those people who are curious about what Christians believe and why they believe the things they do. And for those who are afraid they will not understand the terminology or definitions, please don't worry. His definitions are clear and easily understandable; Dr. Geisler doesn't waste words to try to appear scholarly or impressive to academia. My hope is that Dr. Geisler will continue to add more information including charts with every future reprinting of this work.

This book is a great resource for reference in Christian Apologetics. It is organized like an encyclopedia with the references listed alphabetically from beginning to make things easy to find. This has been a tremendous resource in my apologetic library.

Wow. This will take me years of study to get through. It truly is an encyclopedia. It has offered answers to every question I've researched.

I am not aware of another resource that approaches the breadth and depth of Christian apologetics topics found here. I use this book all the time and find the articles concise, informative and insightful. If you are really into Christian apologetics, you have found a book you definitely need. Many of the articles refer to one another so it is possible to start in one area of interest and be led to other topics that provide further depth. This is especially true in the areas of epistemology, arguments and evidence for God's existence, and the thoughts of most famous philosophers throughout history. As you read through the chains of articles, Dr. Geisler's method as a classical apologist comes through effectively. He frequently refers to the use of evidence combined with reason as being sufficient to prove that God exists (there are other aspects to classical apologetics, but this is a big one). For example, in his article about Gordon Clark (famous presuppositional apologist whose methods were very different from the classical method), Geisler writes: "Logic...tells what could be true; not what is true. To know what is really true, sooner or later one must touch base with the external world. This is what classical apologetics does." p153 The strength of this book is Dr. Geisler's extensive knowledge of philosophy/worldviews and how they interact with world religions, especially

Christianity, through the ages. There is a good article on Islam and a slighter one on Hinduism. His writing style is very clear provided you have some background to approach the material being discussed. This is not a shortcoming of his book, it's just the nature of the content in all intermediate/advanced apologetic books. There are a few things this book is not, that might reasonably be expected. It does not do much to address pseudo-Christian cults (there are lots of them). For example, there are no articles under "Mormonism", "Joseph Smith", "Latter Day Saints", "Jehovah's Witnesses", "WatchTower Society", etc. Unfortunately, the publisher's back cover on the book (which serves as the only preface) indicates that it could be used in counter-cult apologetics. I do not believe it is well suited to that specialized task, though it is generally useful for many apologetics ministries. Dr. Geisler has a book called "When Cultics Ask", but I am not familiar with it. "Fast Facts on False Teachings" by Ron Carlson is useful for basic counter cult information. Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics also does not directly address many ethical apologetics topics. There are no articles specifically for: abortion, euthanasia, gambling, etc. This book may not be useful to you if you are not interested in deeply pursuing a variety of apologetics topics. If you are looking for more down-to-earth, conversational style responses in everyday, apologetic/evangelistic encounters try these authors: Paul Copan, Ken Boa, Paul Little, Cliffe Knechtle. This is a must have resource for those who are studying apologetics broadly and deeply, especially as it intersects with philosophy, world religions and some scientific issues. There are good articles on Hume, Aquinas, Muhammad, Pascal, Darwin and many others. Dr. Geisler has done us a great service by distilling his gifted lifetime of work/knowledge in this way.

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