I. What is apologetics?
   A. I Peter 3:15
   B. Traditional approaches to apologetics
      1. Evidentialism
      2. Presuppositionalism
      3. Fideism
   C. The goals and limitations of apologetics

II. Apologetics in the context of Postmodernism
   A. What is Postmodernism?
   B. The contrast between the "modernist" and the "postmodernist"
      1. "A massive intellectual revolution is taking place that is perhaps as great as that which marked off the modern world from the Middle Ages" (D. Allen, Christian Belief in a Postmodern World, 2).
      2. The scientific rationalism of the Enlightenment presupposed a foundation of objective truth. Postmodernism argues that truth itself is a "construct." Gene Veith notes "Modernists did not believe the Bible is true. Postmodernists have cast out the category of truth altogether. In doing so, they have opened up a Pandora's box of New Age religions, syncretism, and moral chaos" (Veith, Postmodern Times, 192-193).
      3. Modernists valued unity; postmodernists value diversity.
      4. Modernists looked for a universal framework of knowledge; postmodernists question all "totalizing" or "foundational" systems.
      5. Modernists emphasized the individual; postmodernists emphasize the culture.
      6. Modernists sought order; postmodernists prize disorder.
   C. Characteristics of Postmodernism
      1. Meaning, morality, and truth have no objective existence. "Principles are preferences."
      2. Individuals are wholly shaped by cultural forces. Every culture constructs its own reality.
      3. Denial of the transcendent. There are no absolutes.
      4. All human institutions and relationships are reduced to expressions and masks of the primal will to power.
      5. Reason is rejected in favor of emotion.
      6. A new world order of cultural pluralism is envisioned as the mode of communal existence.
      7. Tolerance is the supreme virtue. "Those who question the postmodern dogma that 'there are no absolutes' are excluded from the canons of tolerance."
   D. Key apologetic issues
      1. Relativism
      2. Reality
      3. Reason
   E. The place of the church in shaping an apologetic to Postmodernism
1. Confessional faithfulness
2. Catechetical clarity
3. Liturgical integrity

### III. Resources for study and use in campus ministry


Lee, Philip. *Against the Protestant Gnostics*. Oxford University Press.

Leffel, Jim. "Understanding Today's Postmodern University" @ [http://Xenos.org/essays/pomouniv.htm](http://Xenos.org/essays/pomouniv.htm)


Matzat, Donald. "Evangelism in a Postmodern Age" in *Convention Proceedings-60th Regular Convention*. The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

Oden, Thomas. *After Modernity...What?* Zondervan.


Wells, David. *No Place for the Truth-Or Whatever Happened to Evangelical Theology*. Eerdmans.

For additional material on postmodernism check out these websites:

- Tentatio: The Church in Postmodern Times ([http://www.cuw.edu/bioethics/tentatio.htm](http://www.cuw.edu/bioethics/tentatio.htm))
- University Lutheran Chapel-Minneapolis ([http://www.tc.umn.edu/~lsf](http://www.tc.umn.edu/~lsf))

Another helpful resource for addressing postmodernism with campus ministry/congregational groups is the video *Here We Stand: Postmodernism* featuring Gene Veith, Don Matzat, and Paul McCain. This video is available from Lutheran Visuals, 10466 Plano Road, Dallas, TX 75238. Telephone: 1-800-527-3211.

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VII.11.2000