
Institute for Lutheran Apologetics
S P E A K E R S ' B U R E A U

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS (AS OF OCT 8, 2024)

Introduction to Apologetics, Michael Berg

We Believe and Know: An Introduction to Evidential Apologetics, Caleb Bassett

Sharing Christ in a Secular World, Luke Thompson

The Scientific Revolution and Its Aftermath, Kerry Kuehn

The Problem of Evil, Michael Berg

PRESENTATION AND SPEAKER DESCRIPTIONS

***Introduction to Apologetics, Michael Berg* (1-, 2-, or 3-hour talks available)**

Christians have been given the command to “Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have” (1 Peter 3:15). But what does that look like? In this presentation we will explore the ways Christians have and can speak about their faith to the skeptic. How might a philosopher, a scientist, a lawyer, an historian, or even an artist look at the evidence of God’s existence and specifically the facts of Christ’s resurrection? Each has a unique vantage point about the same basic fact: Christ rose from the dead and defeated the devil for you and me.

Presenter: Rev. Dr. Michael Berg teaches at Wisconsin Lutheran College. He is the author of *Vocation: the Setting for Human Flourishing* (1517), *The Baptismal Life* (Northwestern), *On Any Given Sunday* (1517) and an upcoming volume entitled *Peter: Theologian of the Cross* (Northwestern). He co-hosts of the podcast Let the Bird Fly! He is married to Amanda and together they have three daughters.

***We Believe and Know: An Introduction to Evidential Apologetics, Caleb Bassett*
(1-hour talks to a full course available)**

American society has become pluralistic and secular. The Christian tradition is no longer a common heritage. As a result, approaches to evangelism that worked well in the past have seemingly little purchase on the hearts and minds of people swimming in today’s cultural currents. Rather than lament the state of affairs, Christians can instead explore the practice of evidential apologetics as a timely and effective toolkit for evangelism in contemporary settings. This presentation will summarize the evidential approach to apologetics, demonstrate its particular strength as a Lutheran approach to evangelism, and offer participants a guide for further study in the field.

Presenter: Rev. Caleb R. Bassett serves as pastor of Our Redeemer Lutheran Church in Madison, Wisconsin. Before that he served for over a decade in Southern California. He is a Fellow of the International Academy

of Apologetics, Evangelism, and Human Rights in Strasbourg, France and a member of the Steering Committee of the WELS Institute for Lutheran Apologetics.

Sharing Christ in a Secular World, Luke Thompson (1-, 2- or 3-hour talks available)

The church in the West finds itself in a strange world where postmodernists say there's no such thing as truth, where critical theorists say it's all about power, and where many scientists envision the world as free from the supernatural. How do we share the truth of Christ in this kind of culture? Join us as we see just how deep secularism has affected the church, but also how God has put us in a time perfect for gospel ministry.

Presenter Bio: Luke Thompson (M.Div theology, M.A. philosophy) taught philosophy courses at Wisconsin Lutheran College and Bethany Lutheran College before becoming a pastor in WELS. He served eight years in Ottawa, ON, Canada, at St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran, and for over twenty years he has worked with and help start campus ministries, presenting internationally on apologetics, philosophy, and pop culture. His most recent divine call is to Martin Luther College, where he teaches theology, history, and philosophy and leads a "film and philosophy" club and a Great Books club. He is author of *Your Life Has Meaning* (a study on Ecclesiastes and philosophy) (NPH) and co-author of *Quick to Listen* (NPH).

The Scientific Revolution and its Aftermath (3-, 4-, or 5-hour talks available)

During the 17th and 18th century, there was a significant shift in how people thought about the world and our place in it. This shift is sometimes called the *scientific revolution*. It is associated with names such as Galileo Galilei, Rene Descartes, Isaac Newton, Robert Boyle and Francis Bacon. But what, exactly, were these so-called "scientific revolutionaries" rebelling against? After all, a great deal of scientific knowledge about the world had already been acquired and applied by the 17th century.

Upon careful inspection, it seems that the revolution of the 17th century was less a scientific revolution than a *philosophical*—and even a *theological*—revolution. During this tumultuous time, ancient and traditional views about the world, about man, and about God were largely abandoned in favor of a purely *mechanistic* and *materialistic* world-view.

This radical change, ushered in by many well-meaning Christians, in the name of science, had profound unintended consequences. For example, if *modern science* now maintains that man is merely a complex machine, then might we not treat our fellow man as we might treat a used car or a digital computer?

In this course, we will explore the largely forgotten ancient and traditional view of science, what replaced it, and the dreadful implications of the widely-held modern worldview.

Presenter Bio: Kerry Kuehn earned his B.S. from Cornell University (Engineering Physics), and his Ph.D. from the University of California in Santa Barbara (Physics). He has published his work on the physics of fluids in a variety of scientific journals, and he is the author of the acclaimed four-volume set *A Student's Guide through the Great Physics Texts*. Dr. Kuehn has served as a Professor at Wisconsin Lutheran College for over two decades, where he has developed an introductory physics sequence based on the analysis and discussion of seminal ancient and modern scientific texts, including Aristotle's *Physics*, Kepler's *New Astronomy*, and Einstein's *Relativity*. Dr. Kuehn is a member at St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Wauwatosa. More information on Dr. Kuehn's projects and activities can be found on his personal website: www.kerrykkuehn.com.

***The Problem of Evil, Michael Berg* (1, 2, or 3-hour presentations available)**

The so-called “Problem of Evil” has vexed philosophers since the beginning of time. How could there be a world full of evil if an all-powerful and all-loving God exists? Wouldn’t God want to and be able to stop evil? There seems to only be three logical answers: God isn’t all-loving. God isn’t all-powerful. Or God simply does not exist. In this presentation we will explore a fourth answer: God is in charge of evil with a special emphasis on the Theology of the Cross.

Presenter Bio: Rev. Dr. Michael Berg teaches at Wisconsin Lutheran College. He is the author of *Vocation: the Setting for Human Flourishing* (1517), *The Baptismal Life* (Northwestern), *On Any Given Sunday* (1517) and an upcoming volume entitled *Peter: Theologian of the Cross* (Northwestern). He co-hosts of the podcast Let the Bird Fly! He is married to Amanda and together they have three daughters.