

Wednesday: 01/02/2018

The Allure of Gentleness

When most people who are familiar with it hear the word apologetics, they likely associate it with words like argument, evidence, reason, or defense. But few would think to add gentle or gentleness to the list.

That is because the word apologetics came to us from the Greek legal system, where one makes one's defense against the prosecutor's charges. That is not the ideal context for gentleness. But the apostle Paul and other New Testament writers adapted this term, so that apologetics came to describe Christian attempts to defend or explain the faith to others. And this is how the church has come to use the term.

Now, in principle, there is nothing wrong with this. Since apologetics is involved with ideas, intellectual claims, and reasoning, it is fitting for apologists to engage in intellectual debates and arguments. However, as we walk through the book *The Allure of Gentleness*, given we are seeking to explain the faith in the manner of Jesus, what is not fitting is engaging in debates and arguments with an antagonizing, arrogant spirit.

Reflect:

(Q) Have you witnessed anyone who has been able to combine the intellectual aspects of making a defense, in any context, with a gentle spirit and kind presentation?

(Q) Do you agree that this is the best approach, if not why not?

Devotional by: Dallas Willard

Book: The Allure of Gentleness: Defending the Faith in the Manner of Jesus



*Dallas Willard Ministries is excited to partner with Jeff Whitebread, who, through his work with Capitol Commission, ministers to those serving in the Pennsylvania State legislature, their staff members, and those in the lobbying community. We believe the thoughts and ideas contained in Dallas' book, *The Allure of Gentleness*, are timely guidance for those who seek to stand for truth in a manner that reflects the character of Jesus himself. Dallas acknowledged he gave up trying to get people to do things, preferring instead to inspire them to think things through on their own and come to a different view of matters. We pray that in making this material available, we can continue in his footsteps, playing our part in helping others catch a vision of life with God, becoming his apprentice, and walking in the easy yoke of Jesus — even when engaging the rough and tumble world of the public arena.*