

# The Legacy of the [Apologetics Forum](#)

## Dr. Heinz Lycklama, Founder/President of the Apologetics Forum

The **Apologetics Forum (AF)** was founded in September, 2013 with the following objectives: 1) to respond to the large number of youth leaving their faith, 2) to equip the local community of believers in the defense of **The Faith**, **1 Pet. 3:15**, **Jude 3**, and 3) to answer questions that skeptics and atheists have about **The Faith**, **Col. 2:8**, **4:5-6**. The Forum is a tribute to our oldest daughter Audrey who is now home with the Lord. She played a very important role in the founding of the Apologetics Forum.

First a little bit of history and how God prepared us for the Apologetics Forum. I was born in the occupied country of the Netherlands in the middle of WWII just one mile from the dike protecting us from the North Sea. My parents had 5 children born there and they decided to immigrate to Canada after the war for better opportunities for their children. It is here that I met my future wife, Gerda, whose family also immigrated to Canada a few years later. We grew up in the same town in Canada. My parents had 5 more children in Canada. As a youngster I had a strong interest in science and mathematics, but I knew that my parents could not afford to send me to university. This motivated me to study hard so that I could go to university on scholarships - this worked.

In my very first geology class on college campus I was challenged by the professor to believe in the secular view that clearly attacked the truth in the Bible. Coming from a strong Christian family, and having professed my faith in Christ, I knew this would become an issue for me. However I was too busy with my studies at the time to do anything proactive to address the challenge, and actually Creation vs. Evolution was not an issue that the local church paid much attention to and it never got discussed much in those days.

We were married during the university days and had 3 children in Canada. With my PhD in Nuclear Physics in hand, I was fortunate in landing my first fulltime job in high tech research at Bell Telephone Laboratories in NJ in the early days of the UNIX operating system, TCP/IP networking and digital switching. We had 2 more children in the USA. The older ones attended public schools in NJ. It is here that Audrey, our oldest child, was told by her teacher in fourth grade that we came from a monkey. That got my attention. We decided to send all of our children to Christian schools in the area over the next few years.

After 9 years in NJ, we moved to CA where I took a job with a high tech startup company there as our youngest child was ready to start kindergarten. All of our children attended Christian schools in CA and graduated from the same Christian High School over the next 12 years. As the children reached college age and began entering the secular world, we both got involved in teaching the youth group at our church because we knew they were being challenged by what they observed in the culture around them.

I taught through a number of books of the Bible during this time in Sunday School classes as well as youth night in our home. Gerda had already started teaching women Bible studies in our home and became very involved with the youth in the church. This is also where we got involved in missions, hosting foreign students, and meeting missionaries sent out by our church as well as indigenous missionaries who were in CA for training at the seminary so that they would be prepared to return to their country fully trained in the Bible and theology. Some of the foreign students were saved during their time in the USA and remain lifelong friends with our family. We kept in touch with some of the indigenous pastors who we came in contact with during their time in CA.

We moved to WA state 16 years later after all of our children were out of the house and I had started my consulting business, Open Systems Technology Associates (**OSTA**), working out of my home office. This gave us flexibility in where we could live. I traveled to many countries around the world in my high tech career. Gerda continued to start up and teach a number of women Bible Studies in our home in WA. I taught through more books of the Bible in adult Sunday School and home Bible Studies in our home. I also developed a complete course on **Creation vs. Evolution** at this time. Gerda was now able to accompany me on many of the trips overseas and we both became familiar with many different cultures around the world.

It was also during this time that we became involved with more missionaries on the field. I headed the Missions Committee at our church for ten years and established relationships with many indigenous missionaries as well as American missionaries in many countries in Asia and Europe. During this time I became aware of the special training needed by Bible Schools and churches overseas and developed complete courses on **Christian Apologetics** and **Biblical Worldview**. Lectures and sermons were developed for the churches and schools overseas. With contacts in a number of countries overseas we took short term missions trips to Thailand in Asia, Croatia, Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia in Eastern Europe, and Cameroon in Africa.

By 2005, we were committed to doing two short term trips per year of 4 to 5 weeks each, visiting two countries on each trip. This worked fine when I became semi-retired in 2011 and Gerda was able to teach women groups how to use quilting and other crafts in their ministries. Gerda established a number of quilting clubs in the countries that we visited and did small women Bible studies as opportunities were presented to do so. I developed and gave new messages - both sermons and lectures - at churches, Bible Schools, and even secular schools as arranged by the key evangelical leaders in each country.

This worked fine until we were presented with the fact that Audrey had been diagnosed with stage 4 cancer on our short term trip overseas in late 2012. We were devastated by the news, but Audrey encouraged us to finish the missions trip before coming home. This we did, but we spent much of the next year taking care of her and not going overseas. I had been involved in Creation gatherings about 50 miles from our home, as well as overseas, while working fulltime since the early 2000's. When I gradually retired in 2011, the focus of our ministry was largely overseas. In early 2013 our focus on Apologetics shifted to the needs in our surrounding area. I held a debate on The Existence of God with an atheist that drew an overflow crowd. It is then that we really started to see the need to equip believers in the defense of The Faith.

Studies done by [Answers In Genesis](#) (AIG), documented in the books *Already Gone* and *Already Compromised*, show that more than 70% of youth raised in the church leave the church once they leave home. The main reasons are 1) they are not getting answers from the church to their hard questions and 2) they are being indoctrinated in secularism and evolutionism. A [Koinonia House article](#) confirmed this. It was astounding to us. In reality believers of all ages need to be equipped to address challenges to The Faith in our postmodern world. We had seen the need for teaching Apologetics in our local community, and given that we were not traveling overseas, we decided that this was the right time to establish a local Apologetics Forum to help equip believers in the defense of The Faith.

According to Barna polls at the time, 26% of Christians don't think it matters which religion one follows; they all teach the same lessons; 40% of Christians say Christians and Muslims worship the same God; only 9% of adult Americans have a biblical worldview; only 34% of American adults believe in absolute truth; and only 9% of "born again" teenagers believe absolute truth exists. We find (in the US) that many believers do not know what they believe, why they believe what they believe, and how to defend their faith. This is why Apologetics is so important. We are all commanded to be ready to defend our faith, **1 Pet. 3:15**, not just church leaders.

I came to realize that our youth did not have an understanding of what they believed, why they believed it, and how to defend what they believed. Our youth were not getting answers to their hard questions from the church, and they could not reconcile the science that they were taught in their schools with the Bible. They were told that the Bible is not a book of science, that scientific statements in the Bible were myths, that the theory of Evolution was a fact, and that the first 11 chapters of Genesis were not true history. They were told that there was no such thing as absolute truth and that the Bible could not be believed and trusted.

We recognize that the main reasons unbelievers have for not coming to faith in Christ are:

- Lack of intellectual knowledge of God. **Hos. 4:6**. However God is evident by His nature (**Rom. 1:18-22**) and by the moral law (**Rom. 2:15**).
- Perceived hypocrisy of other Christians.
- Accepting Christ would require turning away from sin - it's a moral issue.
- If God is all-loving and all-powerful, why is there so much pain, suffering and evil in the world? However, only the Bible explains it; other so-called "holy books" do not.
- The perceived conflict between science and the Bible. Scientific statements in the Bible are true and in fact anticipate scientific discoveries long after they were written. Science supports Creation much better than Evolution.
- They do not get answers from the church to their hard questions.

Throughout my adult life I have always wanted to demonstrate that if God is who He says He is, then what we observe in His Creation (**General Revelation**) must match what is in His Word (**Special Revelation**). Given my knowledge in science and in the Bible, and seeing the need, I decided to found the Apologetics Forum in our local area. The primary purpose of the Forum was always to equip believers in the defense of The Faith, and secondarily to be able to answer the questions and claims of the skeptics and atheists. We need to explain that what we believe to be true must address reality. In turn we could ask the question of the atheists and skeptics - does what you believe to be true match reality?

The **Apologetics Forum** (**AF**) was founded to help equip Christians in the defense of The Faith in the postmodern world in three related areas: 1) **Creation vs. Evolution**, 2) **Christian Apologetics** and 3) **Biblical Worldview**. The **AF** provides a local Forum for lectures and DVD programs by knowledgeable presenters on these topics. All presentations are given with the presupposition that the Bible is God's inspired Word, inerrant in its original autographs, and authoritative. The Bible is a total worldview that speaks to all disciplines and areas of our life.

Monthly **AF** meetings are held in Arlington, WA. Each meeting includes a lecture or the showing of a DVD on a topic within the scope of the Forum's mission. There is time for discussion on the topic presented, followed by exhibits with books/DVDs for sale, and refreshments. The **AF** creates a Forum where Christians can learn from each other, ask the hard questions about The Faith, Creation and Worldview, and receive the support of a community of Christian thinkers. The Forum equips Christians with well-researched information on issues that seek to challenge the truth of Christianity as revealed in the Bible.

The **AF** is a non-denominational Forum overseen by a Board of Directors whose members have knowledge in the topics discussed at **AF** meetings and have a strong interest in providing and supporting an environment in which participants can gain well-researched information in the defense of the Christian faith. With a very supportive Board and many volunteers who see the importance of Apologetics and contribute to the running of the Apologetics Forum, we are able to help equip the saints.

The **AF** is committed to the absolute truth and authority of the Bible as God's inspired Word, inerrant in its original autographs. We provide evidence (fact, reason, experience) for the truth of The Faith [primary] and answer the claims and objections of skeptics, atheists and agnostics [secondary]. The **AF** makes resources available to (but does not take the place of) parents, schools, or churches. We provide resources such as lectures, books, DVD's, booklets, a lending library, social media, live streaming, and recorded messages on the **AF** website.

Skeptics claim that the Bible is based on ancient myths and that our faith is blind and without evidence. We believe that the Bible is God's Word - it is authoritative, inspired, and inerrant in its original autographs. We trust the Bible for its spiritual truths, **2 Tim. 3:16**. The truth of the Bible is confirmed by archaeology, history, geography, and prophecy. Archaeological discoveries, especially the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Ebla Tablets, have established the accuracy of innumerable details of the Bible. More than 50% of the 1000+ prophecies, messianic as well as those about people, places, and events in the Bible, have already been fulfilled. Scientific statements in the Bible are amazingly accurate, some even anticipating scientific discoveries made over the last few centuries. We see that modern science supports Creation much better than Evolutionism. The first eleven chapters of Genesis are the foundation for our faith. There are more than 300 so-called "holy books" in the world. The Bible is unique among them all.

#### Apologetics Forum Statement of Belief

- We are always to be ready to give an intelligent, biblically accurate defense of the Christian faith with gentleness and respect. **1 Pet. 3:15; Matt. 22:37; Jude 3, Col. 4:5-6.**

- The Bible, in its entirety, is God's inspired word. It is fully inerrant in its original autographs, not only concerning spiritual issues, but also in history and science. **II Pet. 1:20-21; II Tim. 3:16.**
- The universe and all it contains, both living and non-living, was designed by God and created out of nothing in six days as described in Genesis. Biological changes since creation have been confined within the created kinds. **Gen. 1:1-31; Ex. 20:11.**
- The Noachian Flood was an historic event, worldwide in extent. **Gen. 6:17; II Pet. 3:6.**
- Acceptance of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is God, Creator and Redeemer, is mankind's only path to reconciliation with God. **John 1:1-3; Col. 1:16; Acts 4:12; II Cor. 5:19.**
- The biblical worldview is based on the infallible Word of God and is the foundation of all we say and do. The Bible speaks to all areas of life: ethics, psychology, sociology, science, law, politics, economics, and history. We engage our culture by thinking biblically. **1 Ch. 12:32; Col. 2:8.**

What is our connection to the Legacy of the Footprints poem and the Powers? When we were dating in Ontario, Canada in the early 1960's we attended the Youth For Christ meetings in Hamilton, Ontario. Paul Powers was still single and the leader of that ministry. After we immigrated to NJ, Gerda and Audrey went shopping one day when she was 8 years old and read the Footprints poem in a store. Audrey was so impressed with the poem that Gerda bought a copy. Later on Gerda attended a womens meeting at our church which had invited Margaret Fishback Powers (now married to Paul) to speak at a conference there. This is where Gerda first met the "Footprints lady." About 30 years later we had moved to WA state and the church we were attending invited the Powers to do the children's ministry during their annual missions conference that we were part of. It is there that we reestablished our connections with the Powers and remain connected to this day. Gerda's quilting group has contributed many quilts to the Powers' Little Peoples Ministry for them to take overseas on their missions trips to minister to orphans.

The Footprints poem was written by Margaret in 1964. Gerda wrote one chapter in each of Margaret's two recent books on Footprints, and Alysa Kelsey, our granddaughter (Audrey's daughter), wrote a poem in the first book. We attended the 50th anniversary gathering celebrating the Footprints Poem in 2014. I spoke at the luncheon celebrating the 25th anniversary of the Footprints Museum in 2016. We are privileged to be associated with Paul and Margaret Powers who have legacies of their own with the Footprints Poem and with the Little Peoples Ministry.

Wrapping up the story about the Legacy of the Apologetics Forum, I have been involved in Apologetics for many years with local groups as well as overseas. Our overseas ministry was interrupted by Audrey's illness in late 2012. However, God used this time to start up a local Apologetics Forum to help equip believers in the defense of The Faith. When God took Audrey home in late 2013 we took comfort in the fact that Audrey knew where her final home was and that we would meet again in God's time. Her faith was strong and her witness was evident until the very end. My main three courses in Apologetics had been completed by then. One of my messages was on pain and suffering and the biblical explanation for that. Even though I had experienced the passing on of two of my siblings, losing Audrey made this message much more personal and difficult to give.

I do the ministry of the Apologetics Forum in gratitude for my salvation, thankful for the sacrifice that my parents made in immigrating to Canada from our war-torn homeland, and motivated by the opportunity that I had to study science and to study and teach the Bible. Reading John Piper's book *Don't Waste Your Life* convinced me that I should use what I was given in my life for God's glory in my retirement. Retirement is just a change in careers. As I see the changes that have occurred in our culture in my lifetime, I'm motivated to influence and shape the culture as a Christian. Promoting integrity in science is also important to me as a scientist. We do the ministry of Apologetics with greater zeal now in Audrey's memory, and because of her testimony and support. May we all be faithful In knowing The Faith, defending The Faith, living The Faith, and sharing The Faith.

### *Footprints In The Sand*

*One night a man had a dream.  
He dreamed he was walking along the beach with the Lord.  
Across the sky flashed scenes from his life.  
For each scene, he noticed two sets of footprints in the sand;  
one belonging to him, and the other to the Lord.  
When the last scene of his life flashed before him,  
he looked back at the footprints in the sand.  
He noticed that many times along the path of his life  
there was only one set of footprints.  
He also noticed that it happened at the very lowest  
and saddest times in his life.  
This really bothered him and he questioned the Lord about it.  
"Lord, you said that once I decided to follow you,  
you'd walk with me all the way.  
But I have noticed that during the most troublesome times  
in my life, there is only one set of footprints.  
I don't understand why when I needed you most you would leave me."  
The Lord replied, "My precious, precious child,  
I love you and I would never leave you.  
During your times of trial and suffering,  
when you see only one set of footprints...  
it was then that I carried you."*

*Jesus*

©1974 by Copyright © Footprints 2