

# ΑΠΟΛΟΓΙΑ

*A Newsletter Published for Members of*

*The International Society of*

## PRO-LIFE: A QUALITY-OF-LIFE CASE?

Christian Pro-Lifers usually reject out of hand quality-of-life arguments about abortion, insisting that only a sanctity-of-life understanding gives us a fully valid basis for making such judgments. They are right to do so for many reasons. But I think that even the quality-of-life argument for abortion fails, fails miserably, and can be shown to fail miserably.

Pro-Choice arguments trying to spin abortion as a charitable act often focus on the various trials and hardships in life that a foetus unfortunate enough to be “unwanted” or “handicapped” is going to be spared. That seems reasonable until you apply it to some actual test cases. Let’s take a seriously handicapped individual who actually lived, Helen Keller. Did she think her life of such a quality as to be not worth living? It doesn’t seem so. Let’s try again. Does Stephen Hawking think his life of such a quality as to be not worth living? Would he, in other words, prefer non-existence to being bound to a wheelchair and having to talk through a computer? Clearly not; if he did prefer non-existence (assuming that is his concept of what death would be), he could surely arrange to have it.

O.K., let’s try a different kind of case. I have known a few Down Syndrome victims (a condition whose detection often now leads to elective abortion), and I certainly consider them unfortunate. But not one of them wanted to die. Not one of them, once able to make the choice, would have chosen non-existence over the quality of the life he or she enjoyed. (Never mind the consequences of such a choice for an eternal soul—we are limiting ourselves here to considerations about the quality of the present life only, for the sake of argument.) Maybe some people in these situations would so choose; but it only takes one who would not to raise serious ethical questions about the quality-of-life case for abortion.

What is that ethical dilemma? Well, here’s the next question: Would any of these people appreciate it if you unilaterally made the decision whether their lives were worth living

for them without consulting them? Especially if you decided in the negative and proceeded to enact that decision! What would you be guilty of if you did so? Hmmmm.

Another question: What difference does it make if you make that preemptive decision about the value of someone else's life before he or she *can* be consulted on the matter? Would this timing make that person's murder (what else can we call it?) less heinous, or more? That's a hard question. Here's an easier one: Would *you* want to be deprived of the choice to determine for yourself whether your own life was worth living? That's just the Golden Rule, right? If you would not wish to be so deprived, how can you justify depriving someone else of the same . . . er . . . right to choose?

One might point out that once we have added the Golden Rule it is no longer a purely quality-of-life ethic. Something other than considerations of quality, the principle of "Do as you would be done by," is now determining our choices. Exactly. A pure quality-of-life ethic would not really be an ethic at all. And therefore nobody has one. Little deontological bits of what Lewis called the *Tao* (like the Golden Rule) are always snuck in. The Golden Rule is, after all, pretty hard to argue against.

There are then many problems with a quality-of-life ethic, and I am not advocating one. But it is worth pointing out: Even when one is trying really hard to operate on a quality-of-life basis, once we add so simple and universally accepted a moral principle as The Golden Rule to our consideration of the facts, abortion is still very difficult to distinguish from murder and impossible to justify.

**Donald T. Williams, PhD**

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## **FORTHCOMING ISCA PUBLICATIONS**

**C. Fred Smith**, *Developing a Biblical Worldview: Seeing Things God's Way* (Nashville: B and H Academic, 2015) ISBN: 978-1433674464. Forthcoming, Jan 2015.

*Developing a Biblical Worldview* offers a simple rubric for understanding the worldview presented in Scripture, and for comparing it with the reader's own worldview, and the worldview of the larger culture. Readers will be able to see both biblical and unbiblical ideas lurking in popular culture, such as TV Shows, sports, and movies, and how to use these insights to open apologetic conversations with skeptics and non-believers. Central to the book is the idea that a biblical worldview is not "adopted" but rather develops over a lifetime of discipleship.

**Donald T. Williams**, "Coming Home: The Influence of Chesterton's *The Everlasting Man* on C. S. Lewis," in *The Ten Books that Most Influenced C. S. Lewis* (proceedings of the conference of the same name), Bloomsbury, April 2015; "Text vs. Word: C. S. Lewis's

Doctrine of Inspiration and the Inerrancy of Scripture," chp. in festschrift for Norm Geisler, (Wipf & Stock, 2015); "The 'Trilemma': Pro," in *C. S. Lewis's Defense of Christianity: For and Against*, ed. Gregory Bassham (Amsterdam: Rodolpi, 2015); "Discerning the Times: Why We Lost the Culture War, and How to Make a Comeback," *Christian Research Journal*, May, 2015.

## **RECENT ISCA PUBLICATIONS**

**Norman Geisler's** *Christian Apologetics* (first published in 1976 and in continuous print since) has been totally revised by Baker Books. **Geisler's Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics** is permanently out of print. It has been replaced by an abridged edition titled *The Big Book of Christian Apologetics* (Baker). **Geisler** and **Jason Jimenez**, *The Bible's Answers to 100 of Life's Biggest Questions* (Baker) is now hot off the press.

Some twenty of **Dr. Geisler's** apologetics books are now available for an inexpensive price at [www.BastionBooks.com](http://www.BastionBooks.com). It includes a two volume *History of Philosophy* (nowhere else in print) and a totally revised volume of *From God to Us*.

If you are looking for a Junior High level apologetics, Bethany has published it by **Norman Geisler** and **Patty Tunncliff**, *Reasons to Believe*.

**Donald T. Williams**, "Anselm and Aslan: C. S. Lewis and the Ontological Argument," *Touchstone: A Journal of Mere Christianity* 27:6 (Nov. / Dec. 2014): 36-39; "Cartographer of the Divine: S. S. Lewis as *Doctor Ecclesiae*," *Inklings Forever: a Collection of Essays from the Ninth Frances White Ewbank Colloquium on C. S. Lewis and Friends* IX (2014).

### PAPERS PRESENTED

**Donald T. Williams** presented a paper, "Aslan and Anselm: C. S. Lewis and the Ontological Argument" at the annual meeting of the Evangelical Philosophical Society in San Diego, CA, Nov. 19. **Williams** also participated in a panel discussion on "The Current State of Lewis Scholarship" for an Evangelical Theological Society session (the two groups meet concurrently).

### PREACHING AND OTHER SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

**Donald T. Williams** presented a devotional on "The Role of Narrative in the Christian Message" at the Lembrook Retirement Center in Atlanta on Dec. 16. He also preached at University Church, Athens, GA., on Sunday, Nov. 23. His Sunday School series on "A Strategic Grasp of Scripture" continues at University Church. Audiofiles of the sermon and the weekly lessons can be heard at [www.theuniversitychurch.org](http://www.theuniversitychurch.org).

**Williams** also presented a lecture, "An Encouraging Thought: The Theology of Tolkien's Middle Earth," at the Areopagus

Forum, Perimeter Church, St. Johns, GA, on Jan. 15, and for a local home-school group at Toccoa Falls College on Feb. 6.

### EVANGELICAL MINISTRIES TO NEW RELIGIONS PLANS CONFERENCE!

The EMNR Conference will be in Denver May 1-2, 2015. The theme is "Myth Taken: The Cultural Challenge to the Church: The plenary speakers are Cal Beisner, Tim Challies, H Wayne House, Keith Plummer, and Chelsen Vicari. For more information, go to <http://emnr.org/myth-taken-the-cultural-challenge-to-the-church/>

### APOLOGETICS EVENTS

**Terry Rathman** and **James Martin** (local RTB chapter event coordinator in Knoxville TN), gave three presentations on the "Chemistry of Life" January 11-13 at different venues, ie church to small colleges. The content of each talk was geared to the audience's level of understanding of chemistry. Too often many apologists gloss over the chemistry of life and fail to see how fine-tuned the molecular level of life is designed even down to the uniqueness of the structure of water. Regardless of the 'level' of the realm of God's General Revelation that one explores, design is inherent at each level and interconnected vertically with each level. One major area is chirality, which to an organic chemist, such as **Rathman** is the death nail to the naturalistic origin of life. If the origin of life cannot be explained, then the evolutionary theory is 'dead in the water', to quote a good friend at RTB. Also emphasized at each talk was the Central Dogma of the 'Chemistry of Life' as published in 1958 by Sir Francis Crick. The complexity of these chemistries appears to make the blind watchmaker a straw man argument. For instance, of the 'three' steps of the Central Dogma, one step includes replication of DNA (and the entire cell). Thus in context of the Paley's watch maker argument, unlike the watch which he found on the ground, The

Watchmaker's clock will have multiplied by morning.

On 19 January, **Mark Riser** led a discussion for the Shreveport Reasons to Believe meeting. On 25 January he manned a booth representing Followers of Jesus of Nazareth at the Shreveport World Religion Day event and participated in a panel discussion on the topic "What is the Uniting Principle of your Faith Tradition?" The panel consisted of Riser and three others representing various world religions.

On 16 February **Riser** will be teaching Lesson One of "Navigating Genesis" for the Shreveport Reasons To Believe meeting. On 27-28 February he will be speaking at the Truth Wars apologetics boot camp for high school seniors and college freshmen with Bruce Hennigan. This spring he will be teaching the Discover Point class "Islam: The Big Questions" with Bruce Hennigan at Brookwood Baptist Church (date to be determined). These events will all entail equipping Christians and presenting the Gospel. **Riser** asks your prayers as he prepares and presents.

### **BOOK REVIEW**

Seven Garofalo, *Right for You, but Not for Me? A Response to Moral Relativism*. Charlotte, NC: Triedstone, 2013. Xxv + 285 pp., pb, np.

Garofalo's book is a popular critique of moral relativism and defense of moral absolutes. It contains no arguments that a professional apologist will not already know, but is a good summary for laymen. Garofalo starts by defining the key terms and then gives a history of relativism from its historic roots to its explosion in the 1960's. He discusses the influence of the media and of non-Christian worldviews and the influence of relativism on

American culture and politics. Then he makes a positive philosophical case for absolutes and concludes with a practical chapter on how to answer relativist arguments.

The book is written for laymen, but even professional apologists will find ammunition in some of the quotations. The section on the history behind the "separation" of church and state is especially rich in that way. There are some unfortunate errors that make one shake one's head. We are told for example that John 3:16 was the most quoted Scripture before Protagoras—who lived in the 400's BC (p. 25)! Nevertheless, this is a useful book to give to confused laymen, especially if the apologist follows it up with his own discussion.

**Donald T. Williams**

### **ISCA CONFERENCE TO EXAMINE ROLE OF SCRIPTURE IN EVANGELICAL IDENTITY**

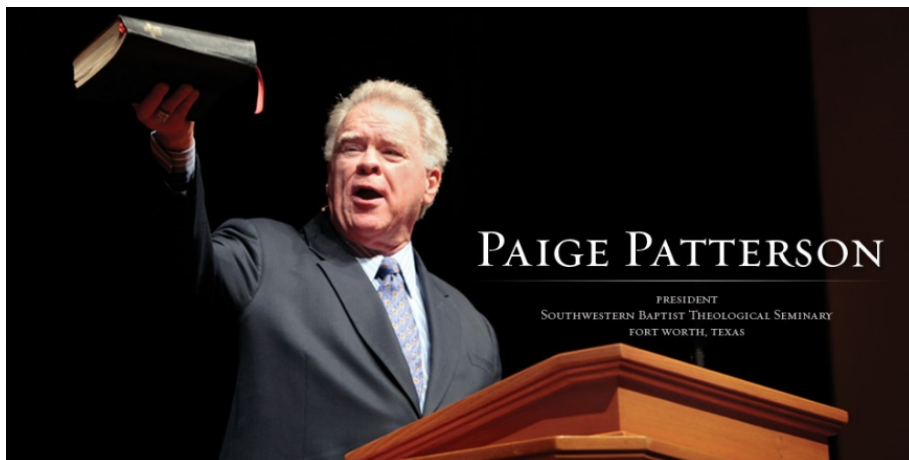
The annual meeting of the International Society of Christian Apologetics will take place at Southern Evangelical Seminary in Charlotte, NC, April 10-11, 2015. The theme will be "**Inerrancy and Evangelical Identity.**" Papers on other topics of apologetic interest will also appear in workshops. Plenary speakers include Dr. Richard Land, Dr. Paige Patterson, and Professor Sarah Geiss. Go to the ISCA website for further information and registration!

**APOLOGISTS TO FOCUS ON  
INERRANCY  
INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF CHRISTIAN  
APOLOGETICS MEETING, SOUTHERN EVANGELICAL  
SEMINARY, CHARLOTTE, NC, APRIL 10-11**

*Donald T. Williams, PhD*

I have the honor of serving as president of the International Society of Christian Apologetics (ISCA) this year. Our annual meeting is going to be very accessible to many in the Southeast, at Southern Evangelical Seminary in Charlotte, NC, Fri-Sat., April 10-11, 2015. The theme is “Inerrancy and Evangelical Identity.” How essential is a full view of biblical authority to who we are as Evangelicals? It is a doctrine that is under renewed assault, even from within what purports to be Evangelicalism.

We are going to have a stellar line-up of plenary speakers to address such an important topic.



**Paige Patterson**

First we have two giants from the Southern Baptist Convention, **Richard Land** and **Paige Patterson**, who will talk about the struggle for inerrancy in that denomination and what we can learn from it for the struggles ongoing in other Evangelical churches and organizations. Nobody has had more personal experience with such things than these two. Land will talk about the history of the struggle for inerrancy in the SBC, and Patterson will focus on the practical lessons to be learned from it. This will be balanced by rising star **Sarah Geis**, Professor of Philosophy at Denver Seminary, who will speak on making the case for inerrancy, not so much to the church as to the world. Their titles are as follows:



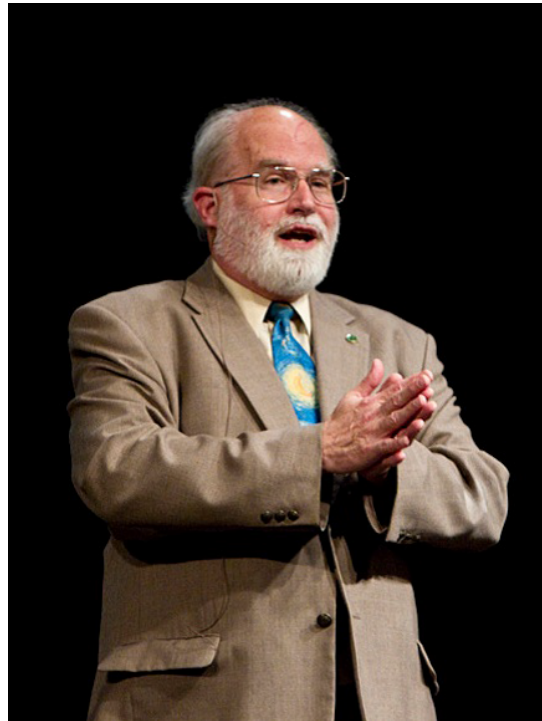
**Richard Land**

- **Richard Land**, “The Southern Baptist Convention, 1979-1993: What Happened, and Why” (To learn more about Richard Land, go to <http://www.drrichardland.com/about.>)
- **Paige Patterson**, “The Consequences of Revolution: The Conservative Resurgence in the Southern Baptist Convention: A Case Study” (To learn more about Paige Patterson, go to [http://www.paigepatterson.info./](http://www.paigepatterson.info/))
- **Sarah Geis**, "The Apologetics of Inerrancy: Making Our Case to the World" (To learn more about Sarah Geis, go to [http://justifiedfaith.com/author/scgeis./](http://justifiedfaith.com/author/scgeis/))



## Sarah Geis

Then I will do a presidential address on “Discerning the Times: Why We Lost the Culture War and How to Make a Comeback,” in which I will address the related area of how subjectivist hermeneutics undermines biblical authority and our ability to apply it to the world around us. The older critics of inerrancy believed that there was such a thing as truth and error; the new challenge is not so much to the truth of Scripture as to whether there is such a thing as truth at all, not so much to whether Scripture is factually true as to whether any definitive interpretation of its truth claims is possible or even conceivable. We need to catch up in our apologetic here!



**Donald T. Williams**

This is a great opportunity that many of us should take advantage of. Registration is available at:

<http://www.isca-apologetics.org/annualmeeting>. I hope to see many of you there! See the next page for a tentative program:

### **Donald T. Williams, PhD**

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"To think well is to serve God in the interior court."

-- Thomas Traherne

## INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF CHRISTIAN APOLOGETICS

ANNUAL MEETING, April 10-11, 2015

"Inerrancy and Evangelical Identity"

Southern Evangelical Seminary  
3000 Tilley Morris Rd., Matthews, NC 28105  
704-847-5600, Ext. 201; [www.ses.edu](http://www.ses.edu)

### April 10, Friday

9:00 AM – 11:00 AM ISCA Board Meeting

1:00 PM – Registration opens

2:00 – 2:45 PM Welcome, Worship, and Instructions

2:45 -- 3:00 PM Logos Bible Software Presentation

3:00 -- 3:15 PM Break

3:15 -- 4:15 PM **Workshop 1**

- A. William C. Roach**, "The Background of the ICBI Chicago Statement on Inerrancy"
- B. Norm Geisler**, "Is It Just a Matter of Interpretation, not of Inerrancy? Examining the Relation between Inerrancy and Hermeneutics."
- C. Adam Johnson**, "Evolution and Morality: Evaluating Erik Wielenberg's Response to Evolutionary Debunking Arguments."
- D. Jay Hess**, "How to Have a Long-Term Relationship with Jehovah's Witnesses and Help Them Out of the Watchtower"
- E. Trevor Ray Slone**, "Doing Apologetics Without Apology"

4:15 -- 5:00 PM ISCA Members Meeting

4:15 – 6:30 PM Break for Dinner (on your own)

5:30 – 6:30 PM Registration table open

6:30 – 6:45 PM (auditorium) opening prayer/welcome

**6:45 – 7:45 PM (auditorium) plenary session 1: "The Southern Baptist Convention, 1979-1993: What Happened, and Why," Richard Land**

7:45 – 8:00 PM break



8:00 – 9:00 PM (auditorium) plenary session 2: “The Consequences of Revolution: The Conservative Resurgence in the Southern Baptist Convention: A Case Study,” **Paige Patterson**

### April 11, Saturday

8:00 – 9:00 AM Registration opens (coffee and continental breakfast available?)

9:00 – 10:00 AM (Auditorium) Panel Discussion with Plenary Speakers: Paige Patterson, Richard Land, Sarah Geis; Norm Geisler, special guest; Donald T. Williams, Moderator

10:00 – 10:15 Am break

10:15 – 11:15 AM **Workshop 2**

- A. **Christopher Travis Haun**, “[A Reconsideration of the Importance of CSBI and CSBH in Apologetics, Evangelism, and Perseverance in the Orthodox Faith](#): Responding to Contemporary Challenges to the ICBI Statements by Evangelical Apologists and Biblical Scholars”
- B. **Richard G. Howe**, "The Concept of Truth in the Inerrancy Debate, Revisited"
- C. **Fazale (Fuz) Rana**, “Is There a Biochemical Anthropic Principle?”
- D. **Michael A. Field**, “Boniface VIII’s ‘Infallible’ Interpretation of God’s Inerrant Word” (Fri. or Sat. AM)
- E. **Kathryn V. Camp, M.Div.**, “The Problem of Poverty”

11:15 AM – 1:00 PM Lunch Break (on your own)

1:00 – 2:00 PM (Auditorium) Plenary Session 3: "The Apologetics of Inerrancy: Making Our Case to the World," Sarah Geis

2:00 – 2:15 PM break

2:15 -- 3:15 PM **Workshop 3**

- A. **Dan Guinn**, "The Church at the Beginning of the 21st Century: Remembering Francis Schaeffer on Inerrancy and Evangelical Identity."
- B. **Sarah Geis**, "The Epistemology of Inerrancy: Teaching Inerrancy in the Church"
- C. **Ken Wolgemuth**, “The Apologetics of Inerrancy: Making Our Case to the World – What about Science?”
- D. **Kristen Davis**, “Cult Worship at Tel Dan”
- E. **William C. Roach**, “The Resurgence of Neo-Evangelicalism”

3:15 – 3:30 PM break

3:30 -- 4:30 PM **Workshop 4**

- A. **Donald T. Williams**, “Text vs. Word: An Evangelical Critique of C. S. Lewis’s Doctrine of Inspiration and the Inerrancy of Scripture”

- B. **Jeremy Cummings**, “His Story or Historical Fiction: Is There a Connection Between Historicity and Veracity Concerning the Old Testament Saints?”
- C. **Adam Tucker**, “Come to Your Senses: Revealing the Magic of the Modern Mind”
- D. **Randy Douglass**, “The REVEALER: Using Educational Best Practices to Teach the Credibility of the Bible”

4:30 -- 4:45 PM      break

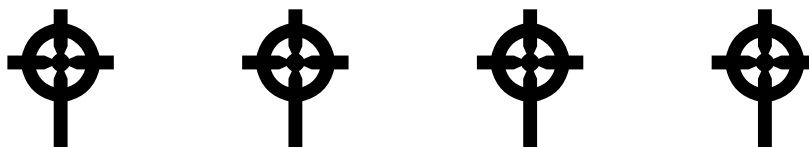
4:45 -- 5:45 PM      **workshop 5**

- A. **Phil Fernandes**, “The Battle for the Bible—Part Two”
- B. **Gideon Lee**, “Truth Demands Loving Confrontation: Adapting the Pragmatic Apologetics of Francis Schaeffer to Confront Transhumanism”
- C. **J. Brian Huffling**, “Philosophy of History: Prolegomena to Inerrancy”
- D. **Christopher T. Haun**, “Inerrancy, Shipwreck, Hermeneutics, and Zombies: Responding to Six Concerns over Paleo-Inerrancy”

6:00 – 7:30 PM      **Banquet**

7:30 – 8:30 PM      **Presidential Address:** “Discerning the Times: Why We Lost the Culture War, and How to Make a Comeback,” **Donald T. Williams**

The Executive Council of the International Society of Christian Apologetics includes Donald T. Williams, President; Kerby Anderson, Acting Vice President; Dan Guinn, Treasurer; Trevor Slone, Secretary; Phil Fernandez, At Large; Tim Adkisson, Webmaster; Bill Roach, Journal Editor; Norm Geisler and Win Corduan, Past Presidents.



**Ἀπολογία** is a newsletter published quarterly for the members of the International Society of Christian Apologetics, *Donald T. Williams, PhD*, editor. Please send news of publications recent or forthcoming, papers, debates, etc. presented, preaching or other ministries, etc., to the editor (Microsoft Word, Times New Roman, 11 pt., single-spaced) at [dtw@tfc.edu](mailto:dtw@tfc.edu). Short news articles, essays, or book reviews (400 words) on issues relevant to your fellow apologists are also welcomed. The deadline for submissions to the next issue is May 15, 2015.

