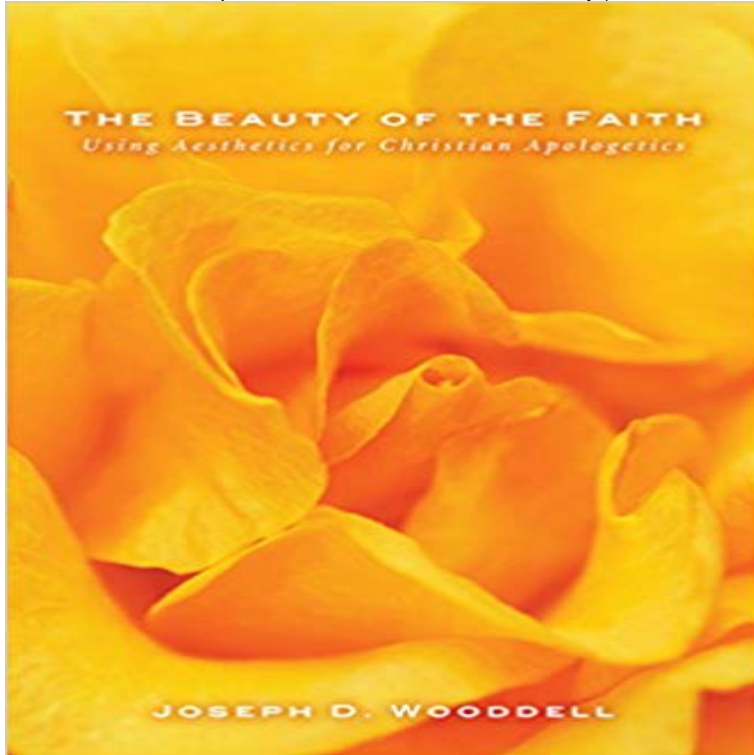


## The Beauty of the Faith: Using Aesthetics for Christian Apologetics



Nearly everyone finds beauty compelling, so Christian apologists should devise ways to present an aesthetic Christian apologetic. Nearly all apologists admit that the beauty of a life well lived and the beauty of the Christian community (along with the use of media and the arts) are not only helpful for apologetics but essential in a postmodern culture. In fact, it is frustrating to see how many apologists mention the need for such an approach but go on devoting most of their energies to traditional approaches. This book is different. It clearly shows the pros and cons of traditional approaches and offers a fresh perspective as well, arguing that beauty is the most compelling apologetic, and suggesting ways to implement such an approach. It demonstrates how Western culture arrived in its current unfortunate situation and uses both Scripture and figures like Athenagoras and Jonathan Edwards to challenge current views on apologetics. For too long, evangelical Christians have sometimes acted as though apologetics were simply a matter of reaching the intellect with more data. Joe Wooddell, one of the brightest lights in evangelical Christian philosophy, continues the conversation in another direction with this fascinating book. I commend it to you, and long for the day when evangelical Christianity clearly engages the mind, the heart, and the imagination with the gospel of Jesus Christ. --Russell D. Moore Dean, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

This is a timely, careful book bringing together the neglected topics of apologetics and of beauty and aesthetics. Joe provides a detailed, constructively critical analysis of various apologetic approaches and sets it in an historical discussion of beauty as a tool for reaching people for Christ, the Beautiful One. Well worth an informed read. It will excite and inspire. --E. David Cook Holmes Professor of faith and Learning Wheaton College Wooddells

emphasis on aesthetics in the field of apologetics is as needed in today's Christian community as it is demonstrated in his own life. With singular focus, Wooddell uses the complex relations between beauty, knowledge, virtue, and faith to demonstrate that purely evidentialist and logical arguments for faith are insufficient in a postmodern context. The Christian community will do a better job of fulfilling our greatest commission if we heed Wooddell's advice and reincorporate the beauty of our lives, world, and faith into our apologetic and ministry. --Barry Creamer Associate Professor of Humanities Criswell College Joseph D. Wooddell is Associate Professor of Philosophy at Criswell College in Dallas, Texas. He is coeditor of *The Baptist Faith and Message 2000: Critical Issues in America's Largest Protestant Denomination* (2007).

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