

Just Thinking Apologetics

Continuing with the idea of skepticism, it should be noted that skepticism goes way back. In fact, there were schools of skepticism in the past. The first known schools of skepticism were founded in the 2nd and 3rd centuries. Arcesilaus is believed to have founded the first school of skepticism. He was a philosopher and a product of Plato's Academy.

Christianity and skepticism were at odds from the beginning of the 3rd century. Augustine even wrote books in the late 4th to early 5th century concerning his rebuttal to the skeptics. Earlier than that, the apostle John and Paul both countered heretical beliefs (for Paul, see I Corinthians 15 and for John, see I John 4:1-6), though skepticism was not being promoted as an articulated idea. Skepticism really started to flourish in the 17th century. The great French philosopher, Rene' Descartes, began to write rebuttals to the new skepticism. Descartes was influential in providing a burden of proof, so that the skeptic had to lay down a foundation for why one should be skeptical.

Philosophical skepticism merely believes that certainty of knowledge is not possible (we can never know anything for certain). This is a strange belief, because, though it is claimed that certainty of knowledge is not possible, the statement itself is laid out as a brute fact. So the question that develops is should we be skeptical of all forms of knowledge except for the statement that certainty of knowledge is not possible? This is the kind of world we live in, where people want to question everything (especially Orthodox Christianity) and then provide no foundation for what the truth really is.