

## **Apologetics**

### **Course Syllabus- spring 2023**

The Body of Christ Serving South Jersey

#### **I- Purpose-**

*“but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence...”*

*1 Peter 3:15*

Are we always ready to explain the hope that we have?

Peter tells us to be prepared to do just that. Why do we have such a hope? What is our argument? What is our explanation?

Apologetics is the discipline of defending our hope to those who ask us to give an account. We must study and be ready to, like Paul, reason with those who would seek to bring the faith into question, and we must be ready to provide answers to those who are seeking the truth about what we believe, *and we must be ready to share the gospel in our defense, for it alone has the power to save.*

#### **II- Goals-**

**To know and be able to explain clearly;**

- 1- All people approach evidence with presuppositions.
- 2- All people have a broken epistemology because they by nature start with the wrong presuppositions.
- 3- Having faulty presuppositions and a fallen, sinful nature leads to living a life of self-contradiction and truth suppression.
- 4- God has revealed Himself plainly to all mankind and so all people know the truth about God. We are on trial for having suppressed that truth; He is not on trial, as if He needs to produce more evidence for Himself.
- 5- We will seek, as apologists, to point out the inconsistencies in unbiblical worldviews and call unbelievers to stop suppressing the truth in unrighteousness, reminding them that the only hope to ever find the truth is to call on the One who reveals, and not trust in our own autonomy.
- 6- The proof of the existence of the Christian God is the impossibility of the contrary.
- 7- A correct worldview will comport with reality. Therefore the Christian worldview will not just be presupposed, but be evidenced in the natural world as well as be historically verifiable.
- 8- There will be internal evidences, such as the laws of logic and morality.
- 9 – There will be external evidences, such as creation, the life, death, and resurrection of Christ, and the uniqueness of the scriptures.

10- The person of Christ and his gospel are to be presented clearly in our defense, because they are both the reason for the hope we have, and because they are the Power of God for salvation for all who God grants to believe.

### **III-Required texts**

-Various articles on reformed apologetics, provided in class, and downloadable free of charge from <https://www.cmfnow.com/articles/apologetics> and <https://reformed.org/apologetics/courtesy> of CRTA.

### **IV- Additional texts (It is recommended you purchase both of these for your library, however the church will provide a number of copies for free.)**

Geisler, Norman L, Turek, Frank; *I don't have enough Faith to be an atheist*, Crossway books, 2004.

Lewis, CS; *Mere Christianity*, Harper Collins books, 1952.

#### **Additional recommended reading:**

McDowell, Josh; *A ready defense*, Here's Life Publishers, 1993.

Strobel, Lee; *The Case for Christ*, Zondervan, 1998.

Lewis, CS; *The weight of Glory*, HarperCollins, 1949.

Behe, Michael J; *Darwin's Black Box*, Touchstone, 1996.

Spurgeon, Charles; *All of Grace*, available free online

### **V- Grading**

**The final grade will be determined by**

**Quizzes 33%**

**Class participation 34%**

**Final 33%**

#### **Quizzes-**

Quizzes will be given each class, covering both the previous class's material and any other assigned readings. The lowest quiz will be dropped. Make up quizzes can be arranged for legitimately missed classes.

#### **Class participation-**

Each week we will discuss and debate various positions which will be covered in class and in assigned readings. The idea is to interactively develop the skills necessary to clearly articulate our position. This being the case, speaking up in class is essential! It will also be necessary to stay up to date on our reading assignments, since much of the discussion will center on issues found in the articles and chapters.

#### **Final-**

A comprehensive final exam which will cover all readings, class material, and discussions will be given on the last day of class.

#### **Grading Scale**

A 90-100%

B 80-89%

C 70-79%  
D 60-69%  
F below 59%

## **Outline**

### **1- March 8**

#### **A basic intro to apologetics, epistemology and critical thinking**

Homework- read "Van Til's Presuppositionalism" By Dr. Greg Bahnsen, review "Thinking Critically"

### **2- March 15**

#### **The Presuppositional nature of knowing.**

Quiz on week 1 and "thinking Critically" handout

Homework-,read the "worldviews in their own words" summary, and "inheriting religion" by Dawkins, read "Another cup of Coffee" by Dr. Greg Bahnsen

### **3- March 22**

#### **The failure of the unbeliever's worldview**

quiz on week 2

homework- read "the heart of the matter" by Bahnsen

## **A uniquely authoritative God**

### **4- March29**

#### **The transcendental argument for the existence of God.**

Quiz on week 3 and "the heart of the matter" by Bahnsen

Homework- Listen to the Bahnsen/stein debate

<https://reformedwiki.com/bahnsen-stein-debate>

### **5- April 12**

#### **The self revealing God.**

Quiz on week 4

Homework- complete listening to, or listen again to, the Bahnsen/stein debate

<https://reformedwiki.com/bahnsen-stein-debate>

## **Uniquely coherent worldview**

### **6- April 19**

#### **The argument from Reason and the argument from Morality**

Quiz on week 5 and the Bahnsen/stein debate

## **Uniquely verifiable story**

### **7- April 26**

#### **Creation**

quiz on week 6

Homework- watch James White/Lee baker Debate on New Testament Reliability  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xAjDWtz0CC4>

**8- May 3**

**The scriptures**

quiz on week 7 and James White/Lee Baker debate

**9- May 10**

**The life and death of Jesus Christ, his claims, and the following growth of Christianity**

Final exam