

Apologetics

CRU – *Institute of Biblical Studies*
June 30 – July 14, 2017
Instructor: Keith Plummer, Ph.D.
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Course Description

This course will equip you to confidently and winsomely respond to common objections to the Christian faith, identify and appropriately challenge the worldviews from which they arise, and better understand how cultural contexts shape unbelief. Topics we will explore include the existence and nature of God, the relationship between science and Christianity, miracles, the problem of evil and hell, religious and moral relativism, the trustworthiness of the Bible, and the historicity of the resurrection.

Course Objectives

1. To grow in our understanding of and obedience to God's command that we love Him with our whole selves including our minds.
2. To understand the nature and role of apologetics in evangelistic and discipling conversations.
3. To acquire skill in identifying and challenging the presuppositions underlying various objections to the Christian faith.
4. To learn how to make effective use of questions to further evangelistic and apologetic conversations.
5. To become better equipped to articulate a thoughtful case for Christianity.

Required Texts

Allberry, Sam. *Is God Anti-Gay?* Epsom, Surrey, U.K. The Good Book Company, 2013. (ISBN: 9781908762313)

Keller, Timothy. *The Reason for God*. New York, NY. Riverhead, 2009. (ISBN: 9781594483493)

Turek, Frank. *Stealing from God: Why Atheists Need God to Make Their Case*. Colorado Springs, CO. Navpress, 2014. (ISBN: 9781612917016)

Course Requirements

1. **Reading:** You are to master the content of the assigned text chapters and articles. You must read all of the assigned reading. You will submit a report indicating the

percentage of assigned reading you completed on the final day of the course.

2. **Worksheets:** You will complete seven apologetic worksheets that will give you the opportunity to apply what you have learned in the readings. You will be given a specific situation and then asked to formulate a thoughtful response drawing on the readings and your own previous experience. Your responses may include questions you might ask, issues upon which you would focus, etc.
3. **Project:** The purpose of this course is to help you become more effective in the use of apologetics in the context of evangelism and follow up. During the course you will have the opportunity to develop a tool for use in your personal ministry. You have three options from which to choose:
 - a) **Evangelistic article:** The article should be targeted to your ministry audience (professors, college students, high school students, athletes). It should identify a specific objection to the Christian faith (e.g. problem of evil, religious pluralism, fate of the unevangelized, etc.) and present a carefully crafted and well-reasoned response. It is *not* a research paper. Your grade will be based on (1) evidence of a good understanding of the nature of the problem and how it challenges belief in Christian theism, (2) a well-reasoned response to this problem, and (3) proper packaging (targeted toward an audience, good introduction and conclusion). The article should be 5 to 8 pages in length. The article should be typed, double-spaced, using 12-point type.
 - b) **Follow-up Tool:** Imagine you are sitting across the table from a *believer* attempting to give a reasoned response to an apologetic issue. This tool would help this person discover a scriptural viewpoint on an important apologetic question. Some apologetic issues (e.g. resurrection of Christ, fate of the unevangelized, Heaven and Hell, etc.) lend themselves more readily to this than others. It must include appropriate Scripture related to the issue, carefully chosen questions to aid discovery, logical progression of thought, and creative packaging. Your grade will be based on (1) evidence of a good understanding of the nature of the problem, (2) a well-reasoned scriptural response to this problem, and (3) creativity in packaging (captivating introduction, illustrations, several key points, and attractive visual layout). Note: if you wish, you may organize this tool in outline form. However it is organized, you must use only complete sentences (even for titles of main points). For ease of reading, it should be double-spaced, use type no smaller than 12-point and be at least three pages in length. There is no maximum length and you are encouraged to include diagrams and/or art work.
 - c) **Evangelistic Talk:** The talk should contain about 30 minutes of content (about 4-5 pages of notes) and must interact with one apologetic issue. The talk should be targeted to your audience (college students, high school students, athletes, etc). It must identify a specific objection to the

Christian faith and present a carefully crafted and well-reasoned response. You will turn in a *detailed* outline (typed) of the talk. “Detailed” means a clear statement of every thought/idea you intend to communicate. Your introduction, conclusion, and illustrations must be word for word. Even your outline points should be expressed in complete sentences. Your grade will be based on (1) evidence of a good understanding of the nature of the problem you discuss and how it challenges belief in Christian theism, (2) a well-reasoned response to this problem, (3) creativity in presentation, and (4) proper elements of a good talk (captivating introduction, good illustrations, several key points, and a conclusion). Your notes should be double-spaced and no smaller than 12-point type.

Reading Assignments:

Monday, July 3

T. Keller, Introduction, Chapter Eight
F. Turek, Introduction, Chapter One
Apologetic Worksheet #1

Wednesday, July 5

T. Keller, Chapters Two and Nine
F. Turek, Chapter Four

Thursday, July 6

F. Turek, Chapter Five
Article: “We Don’t Hate Sin So We Don’t Understand What Happened to the Canaanites”
Apologetic Worksheet #2

Friday, July 7

T. Keller, Chapter Six
F. Turek, Chapters Three and Six
Apologetic Worksheet #3

Monday, July 10

F. Turek, Chapter Two
Apologetic Worksheet #4

Tuesday, July 11

T. Keller, Chapters One, Three, and Five
F. Turek, Chapter Eight
Apologetic Worksheet #5

Wednesday, July 12

T. Keller, Chapter Seven
F. Turek, Chapter Seven
Apologetic Worksheet #6

Thursday, July 13

T. Keller, Chapters Ten - Thirteen

Friday, July 14

S. Allberry, entire book

*Your project and completed reading report are due at the beginning of class.***Apologetic Worksheet #7****Lecture and Discussion Schedule**

Friday, June 30	Introduction to Apologetics
Monday, July 3	Evidences of God
Wednesday, July 5	The Problem of Evil
Thursday, July 6	The Morality of God
Friday, July 7	Science, Scientism, & Miracles
Monday, July 10	Reason as Evidence for God
Tuesday, July 11	Only One Way?
Wednesday, July 12	Can We Trust the Bible?
Thursday, July 13	Jesus and the Resurrection
Friday, July 14	LGBTQ and Christianity

Course Grade

Your course grade will be based on the following:

Apologetic Worksheets	70%	(due as shown in Course Assignments above)
Reading Report	10%	(due at the beginning of class, Wednesday, 6/24)
Final Project	20%	(due at the beginning of class, <u>Wednesday, 6/24</u>)

Grading Scale

94-100	A
91-93	A-
88-90	B+
84-87	B
81-83	B-
78-80	C+
74-77	C
71-73	C-
00-70	No Credit

Reading Report: Apologetics

Name _____

Bring this reading report to the final class session on Friday, July 14.

Date Due	Assignment	# Pages Completed (if all, write "all")
Monday, 7/3	T. Keller, Introduction, Chapter Eight F. Turek, Introduction, Chapter One	
Wednesday, 7/5	T. Keller, Chapters Two and Nine F. Turek, Chapter Four	
Thursday, 7/6	F. Turek, Chapter Five Article: "We Don't Hate Sin So We Don't Understand What Happened to the Canaanites."	
Friday 7/7	T. Keller, Chapter Six F. Turek, Chapters Three and Six	
Monday, 7/10	F. Turek, Chapter Two	
Tuesday, 7/11	T. Keller, <i>The Reason for God</i> , Chapters One, Three, and Five F. Turek, Chapter Eight	
Wednesday, 7/12	T. Keller, Chapter Seven F. Turek, Chapter Seven	
Thursday, 7/13	T. Keller, Chapters Ten - Thirteen	
Friday, 7/14	S. Allberry, entire book	

I completed _____ % of the required readings

Signature _____