

Apologetics

CRU – *Institute of Biblical Studies*

June 1 – June 12, 2020

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Course Description

This course will equip you to confidently and graciously 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 relationship between the work of the Holy Spirit and human argument in evangelism, the historicity of Jesus and his resurrection, and commonly-encountered objections to the Christian faith (e.g., the problem of evil, the claim that science and Christian faith are incompatible, and the objection that Christianity is oppressive).

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 and embody a case for Christianity that appeals to the whole person.

Required Texts

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

Chatraw, Joshua & Allen, Mark D. *Apologetics at the Cross: An Introduction to Christian Witness.* Grand Rapids, MI. Zondervan, 2018. (ISBN: 9780310524687)

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 four apologetic worksheets that will give you the opportunity to apply what you have learned in the readings.
3. **Project:** The purpose of this course is to help you become more effective in the use of apologetics in the context of pre-evangelism/evangelism and follow up. During the course you will have the opportunity to develop a tool for use in your personal ministry. You have two options from which to choose:
 - a) **Pre-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 sound biblical/theological 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 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.

Reading Assignments (to be completed by date listed):

If you encounter something in the reading that is unclear and you'd like to discuss it in class, please send me an email (kplummer@cairn.edu) the night before the day by which the reading is to be completed. I'll do my best to address it in class and will not publicly identify who questions are from. Of course, I encourage you to ask questions in class as well.

Monday, June 1

Chatraw and Allen, Introduction, Chapters 1 & 2

Tuesday, June 2

Chatraw and Allen, Introduction, Chapter 5

Making Sense of God Chapter 1: "Isn't Religion Gong Away?"

Worksheet #1

Wednesday, June 3

Chatraw and Allen, Chapter 6

Thursday, June 4

Chatraw and Allen, Chapter 7

Article: "10 Pitfalls of the Foolish Apologist"

Article: "When Evangelism Meets Scientism"

Worksheet #2

Friday, June 5

Chatraw and Allen, Chapters 8 & 9

Article: "Pascal's Method for Presenting the Christian Faith"

Worksheet #3

Monday, June 8

Chatraw and Allen, Chapters 10 & 11

Making Sense of God Chapter 6: "The Problem of the Self"

Tuesday, June 9

Chatraw and Allen, Chapter 12

Article: "Expressive Individualism: What is it?"

Worksheet #4

Wednesday, June 10

Article: "Apatheism is More Damaging to Christianity than Atheism or Antitheism"

Thursday, June 11

Chatraw and Allen, Chapter 13

Article: "Jesus Existed"

Friday, June 12

Allberry, entire book

Your project and completed reading report are due at the beginning of class.

Lecture and Discussion Schedule

Monday, June 1	Introduction to Apologetics
Tuesday, June 2	Apologetic Methods/Understanding Secularism
Wednesday, June 3	Keeping the Gospel Central in Apologetics
Thursday, June 4	Recognizing and Resisting Cultural Idols
Friday, June 5	Understanding Whole-Person Apologetics & Contextualization
Monday, June 8	The Value and Necessity of Asking Good Questions The Inside-Out Approach
Tuesday, June 9	Commonly-Encountered Defeaters Pluralism/Relativism Morality & the Problem of Evil
Wednesday, June 10	Commonly-Encountered Defeaters: Science and the Miraculous Apatheism
Thursday, June 11	Jesus and the Resurrection
Friday, June 12	LGBTQ and Christianity

Course Grade

Your course grade will be based on the following:

Apologetic Worksheets	60%	(due as shown in Course Assignments above)
Reading Report	10%	(due at the beginning of class, Friday, 6/12)
Final Project	30%	(due at the beginning of class, <u>Friday, 6/12</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, June 12.

Date Due	Assignment	# Pages Completed (if all, write "all")
Mon, 6/1	Chatraw and Allen, Introduction, Chapters 1 & 2 (45 pages)	
Tue, 6/2	Chatraw and Allen, Introduction, Chapter 5 (27 pages) <i>Making Sense of God</i> Chapter 1: "Isn't Religion Gong Away?" (19 pages)	
Wed, 6/3	Chatraw and Allen, Chapter 6 (14 pages)	
Thurs, 6/4	Chatraw and Allen, Chapter 7 (23 pages) Article: "10 Pitfalls of the Foolish Apologist" (2 pages) Article: "When Evangelism Meets Scientism" (3 pages)	
Fri, 6/5	Chatraw and Allen, Chapters 8 & 9 (29 pages) Article: "Pascal's Method for Presenting the Christian Faith" (2 pages)	
Mon, 6/8	Chatraw and Allen, Chapters 10 & 11 (50 pages) <i>Making Sense of God</i> Chapter 6: "The Problem of the Self" (15 pages)	
Tue, 6/9	Chatraw and Allen, Chapter 12 (39 pages) Article: "Expressive Individualism: What is it?" (3 pages)	
Wed, 6/10	Article: "Apathism is More Damaging to Christianity than Atheism or Antitheism" (7 pages)	
Thurs, 6/11	Chatraw and Allen, Chapter 13 (29 pages) Article: "Jesus Existed" (3 pages)	
Fri, 6/12	S. Allberry, entire book (85 pages)	

I completed _____ % of the required readings

Signature _____