

Bible / Christian Apologetics

I. Course Description

This one-year course is designed to help the student learn basic Christian apologetic concepts and to be able to apply them. At the end of the course, the student will be very familiar with the Christian position and will have been introduced to basic arguments for and against Christianity. In addition, the student will have thought through her own views of God and the nature of the universe. Subjects covered will include a summary of the biblical message, an in-depth look at one man's very good argument for Christianity, specific evidence for the Christ who is presented in the Bible, various philosophical concepts as they apply to apologetics, and a close examination of the problem of evil.

II. Instructional Materials

The Bible, The New International Version, Zondervan 1984

Lewis, C. S., *Mere Christianity*, Harper, San Francisco, 2001, C. S. Lewis

The Problem of Pain, Harper, San Francisco 2001

Strobel, Lee, *The Case for Christ: A Journalist's Personal Investigation for the Evidence of Jesus*, Zondervan, 1998

Nettelhorst, R. P., Various lectures for Apologetics, B221 at Quartz Hill School of Theology Apologetics (B221). See www.theology.edu

III. Goals and Objectives

Student will be able to do the following:

- A. Describe the basic Christian message ("The Gospel").
- B. Use good arguments and evidence for Christianity.
- C. Show familiarity with the standard arguments for God.
- D. Enumerate her presuppositions.
- E. Describe and defend what she believes.
- F. Have answers for the problem evil poses.
- G. Understand modern changes in thinking.

IV. Course Outline (by week)

A. The Biblical Good News

1. Romans 1 -3: Men have fallen short of God's standards
2. Romans 4-8: God's good news

B. A Cogent Argument for Christianity

1. Morality as a clue to God
 - a. *Mere Christianity*, Preface, Forward, Book 1, ch. 1-2
 - b. *Mere Christianity*, Book 1, ch. 3-5
2. Christian Belief
 - a. *Mere Christianity*, Book 2, ch. 1-3
 - b. *Mere Christianity*, Book 2, ch. 4-5

3. Christian Behavior
 - a. *Mere Christianity*, Book 3, ch. 1-3
 - b. *Mere Christianity*, Book 3, ch. 4-6
 - c. *Mere Christianity*, Book 3, ch. 7-9
 - d. *Mere Christianity*, Book 3, ch. 10-12
4. The Christian God
 - a. *Mere Christianity*, Book 4, ch. 1-3
 - b. *Mere Christianity*, Book 4, ch. 4-6
 - c. *Mere Christianity*, Book 4, ch. 7-9
 - d. *Mere Christianity*, Book 4, ch. 10-11

C. Evidence for Christ

1. The Historical Record
 - a. *Case for Christ*, ch. 1-2
 - b. *Case for Christ*, ch. 3-4
 - c. *Case for Christ*, ch. 5-6
2. Evidence for the Resurrection
 - a. *Case for Christ*, ch. 11-12
 - b. *Case for Christ*, ch. 13-14

D. Philosophical Considerations

1. Traditional Thinking (class notes)
2. Arguments for God
 - a. Mystical Experience (B221-"Mystical Experience Argument")
 - b. First Cause (B221-"First Cause Argument")
 - c. Design (teleological) (B221 - "Teleological Argument")
 - d. Moral (B221 - "Moral Argument")
3. The Modern Change of Paradigm
 - a. (B221-"Introduction" and "Biblical Presuppositions")
 - b. *The God Who is There*, ch. 1-2
 - c. *The God Who is There*, ch. 3-4

E. Evil: The Primary Argument Against God

1. *The Problem of Pain*, ch. 1-2
2. *The Problem of Pain*, ch. 3-4
3. *The Problem of Pain*, ch. 5-6
4. *The Problem of Pain*, ch. 7-8
5. *The Problem of Pain*, ch. 9-10

V. Teaching Methods

- A. Lecture
- B. Reading
- C. Teacher-student discussions

VI. Evaluation

- A. Written question answers
- B. Teacher-student discussions

C. Term paper

VII. Grading Scale

The grading scale will be as follows:

Percentage Score	Letter Grade
90-100	A
80-90	B
70-80	C
60-70	D
Below 60	F