

# ASSEMBLIES OF GOD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

PHI 631/THE 628 Apologetics

James H. Railey, Jr.

Fall 2003

## COURSE SYLLABUS

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

A course designed to equip the student to defend the Christian faith against important contemporary assaults and to build a positive Christian world and life view. Appeal is made not only to the varieties of rational arguments but also to the special contributions of the Pentecostal message.

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon the completion of this course, the student will have demonstrated in classroom discussions, examinations, and papers

1. An understanding of the biblical material that relates to apologetics.
2. A familiarity with the various approaches to apologetics and their theological and philosophical bases.
3. An appreciation for the relationship between faith and reason and an ability to formulate an approach to this relationship that will serve in ministry.
4. Knowledge of some of the key figures in the field of apologetics, both from the history of the church and from the present.
5. An ability to struggle with a defense of some of the major theological positions of Christianity and some of the major difficulties to the faith raised by those who object to Christianity.
6. An understanding of the crucial nature of the claim to exclusivity made by Christendom and some of the ways in which that claim can be defended.

### TEXTBOOKS

Cowan, Steven B., ed. *Five Views on Apologetics*. Counterpoints, ed. Stanley N. Gundry. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 2000.

Strobel, Lee. *The Case for Faith: A Journalist Investigates the Toughest Objections to Christianity*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 2000.

Moreland, J. P. *Scaling the Secular City: A Defense of Christianity*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1987.

### COURSE OUTLINE

- I. Introduction
- II. World Views
- III. Approaches to Apologetics
- IV. Specific Concerns for Apologetics

## **METHODOLOGY**

The primary method of instruction will be the lecture, with ample time devoted to the discussion of the assigned texts and issues that arise in the course of the class.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

1. The student is expected to attend all class sessions. Absences should be for extreme circumstances only. The limits established by the Seminary will be observed. (“Barring a serious medical emergency, credit cannot be granted for courses in which a student has been absent beyond the equivalent of more than 2 weeks” – *Catalog*, 74).
2. The student is expected to submit a three to five page critique of the Cowan book on September 26, 2003. The critique should evidence graduate level interaction with the argument(s) of the book. The student should also be prepared to participate in class discussion of the text on that day.
3. The student is expected to submit a three to five page critique of the Moreland book on October 31, 2003. The critique should evidence graduate level interaction with the argument(s) of the book. The student should also be prepared to participate in class discussion of the text on that day.
4. The student is expected to submit a three to five page critique of the Strobel book on November 19, 2003. The critique should evidence graduate level interaction with the argument(s) of the book. The student should also be prepared to participate in class discussion of the text on that day.
5. The student is expected to submit a fifteen to twenty page paper on a subject from the list to be provided by the professor. The paper should conform to A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, current edition, by Kate L. Turabian, using footnotes for resource documentation. The paper will be graded on content, composition, and style, and is due at class time, December 3, 2003.
6. The student should sustain a mid-term and final exam (the final will not be comprehensive). Both exams will be essay in nature and, except for a personal emergency, must be taken on the assigned dates. The mid-term is scheduled for Friday, October 17, 2003, and the final exam is scheduled for Wednesday, December 17, 2003, from 7:30 A.M. to 10:00 A.M.
7. Late work is subject to grade penalties commensurate with lateness.

## **COURSE GRADING**

The grade for the course will be determined as follows:

|                |     |
|----------------|-----|
| Book Critiques | 25% |
| Exams          | 50% |
| Paper          | 25% |

Grades are recorded and averaged on the basis of the following grade scale: A=12; A-=11; B+=10; B=9; B-=8; C+=7; C=6; C-=5; D+=4; D=3; D-=2; F=1.

All assigned work for the course must be submitted for the student to receive a passing grade for the course. The grade of I (Incomplete) may be granted only for extenuating circumstances upon the written request of the student. Except in the case of severe extenuating circumstances the granting of the I grade will mean that the course grade, assigned when the work is completed, will be reduced by one letter.

## **SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Allen, Diogenes. *Christian Belief in a Postmodern World*. Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1989.

Anderson, J. N. D. *Christianity: The Witness of History*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1970.

Brown, Colin, ed. *History, Criticism and Faith*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1976.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Miracles and the Critical Mind*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. 1984.

Bruce, F. F. *Jesus and Christian Origins Outside the New Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1974.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The New Testament Documents: Are They Reliable?* 5<sup>th</sup> rev. ed. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1960.

Bush, L. Russ, ed. *Classical Readings in Christian Apologetics: AD 100-1800*. Grand Rapids, MI: Academie Books, 1983.

Carnell, Edward J. *An Introduction to Christian Apologetics*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1948.

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Clark, David K. *Dialogical Apologetics*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1993.

- Clark, Kelly James. *Return to Reason*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1990.
- Cowan, Steven B., ed. *Five Views on Apologetics*. Counterpoints, ed. Stanley N. Gundry. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 2000.
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- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Kalam Cosmological Argument*. New York, NY: Macmillan, 1979.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Son Rises*. Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1981.
- Davies, Brian. *An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982.
- Dyrness, William A. *Christian Apologetics in a World Community*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1983.
- Evans, C. Stephen. *Existentialism: The Philosophy of Despair and the Quest for Hope*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1984.
- France, R. T. *The Evidence for Jesus*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1986.
- Geisler, Norman L. *Christian Apologetics*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1976.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Miracles and Modern Thought*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1982.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Philosophy of Religion*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1974.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Roots of Evil*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1978.
- Habermas, Gary R. *Ancient Evidence for the Life of Jesus: Historical Records of His Death and Resurrection*. Nashville, TN: Nelson, 1985.
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- Helm, Paul, ed. *Divine Commands and Morality*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1981.
- Holmes, Arthur F. *All Truth is God's Truth*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1977.
- Horigan, James E. *Chance or Design?* New York, NY: Philosophical Library, 1979.
- Kreeft, Peter, and Ronald K. Tacelli. *Handbook of Christian Apologetics: Hundreds of Answers to Crucial Questions*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1994.

- Lewis, Gordon. R. *Testing Christianity's Truth Claims: Approaches to Christian Apologetics*. Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1976.
- McDowell, Josh. *Evidence That Demands A Verdict: Historical Evidence for the Christian Faith*. San Bernadino, CA: Campus Crusade for Christ, 1972.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *More Evidence That Demands A Verdict: Historical Evidence for the Christian Scriptures*. San Bernadino, CA: Campus Crusade for Christ, 1975.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Resurrection Factor*. San Bernadino, CA: Here's Life, 1981.
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- Mitton, C. Leslie. *Jesus: The Fact Behind the Faith*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1974.
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- Pinnock, Clark H. *A Case for Faith*. Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House Publishers, 1980.
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- Sire, James W. *The Universe Next Door: A Basic WorldView Catalog*. Third ed. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1997.
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Swinburne, Richard. *The Coherence of Theism*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977.

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**SPECIFIC DATA**

Prepared by James H. Railey, July 2003.