

# Apologetics

CRU – *Institute of Biblical Studies*

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## Course Description

This course will equip you to present a rational defense of the Christian faith, to see Jesus as beautiful and brilliant, and to winsomely point others to Jesus (and the gospel) as our greatest need. Topics we will explore include the existence and nature of God, the relationship between science and religion, the problem of pain and hell, religious pluralism, the nature of truth, religious exclusivity, the trustworthiness of the Bible, the historicity of the resurrection, and various cultural issues.

## Course Objectives

1. To **grow** in our knowledge and love of a brilliant and beautiful Christ.
2. To **understand** the nature and role of apologetics in evangelistic dialogue.
3. To **learn** how to winsomely point others to Jesus (and the gospel) as our greatest need by:
  - A. **Becoming** ‘diagnosticians’ and ‘good question askers’—**learning** how to assess a person’s spiritual condition and obstacles to faith in Christ;
  - B. **Learning** how to identify and respond to prominent defeaters to Christianity;
  - C. **Learning** how to articulate a thoughtful case for Christianity.
4. To **understand** at a deeper level God’s call to love Him with all of our minds (and all of our being).

## Required Texts

Craig, William Lane. *On Guard*. Colorado Springs, CO. David Cook, 2010. (ISBN: 9781434764881)

Keller, Timothy. *The Reason For God*. New York, NY. Dutton, 2008. (ISBN: 9781594483493)

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

## 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. On the last week you should fill out a form that states what percentage of the reading you have finished.

2. **Discussions:** This weekly forum is where you, the student, will respond to the discussion topic for the week. Your response constitutes a portion of your overall grade. Please begin by clicking on and replying to the discussion. You will also need to interact with at least 3 other posts, which is also a portion of your overall grade.
3. **Quizzes:** There will be 10 quizzes. Each quiz will be based on the information presented in the assigned reading of the week. No books, notes, outlines, or helps of any kind are allowed during quizzes or exams.
4. **Final Project:** The purpose of this course is to help you become more effective in 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.

## **Lecture and Assignment Schedule:**

### **Module 1: Introduction to Apologetics**

T. Keller, *The Reason for God*, Introduction.  
W.L. Craig, *On Guard*, Chapters One and Six.  
**Discussion on Apologetics**  
**Quiz #1**

### **Module 2: Is God a Moral Monster?**

W.L. Craig, *On Guard*, Chapters Two, Three, and "Personal Interlude: Part One".  
**Discussion: Is God a Moral Monster?**  
**Quiz #2**

### **Module 3: Science and the Impossibility of Miracles**

T. Keller, *The Reason for God*, Chapter Six.  
W.L. Craig, *On Guard*, Chapter Four.  
**Discussion: Science and Miracles**  
**Quiz #3**

### **Module 4: The Problem of Evil**

T. Keller, *The Reason for God*, Chapter Two.  
W.L. Craig, *On Guard*, Chapter Seven and "Personal Interlude: Part Two".  
**Discussion: The Problem of Evil**  
**Quiz #4**

### **Module 5: Is There Only One True Religion?**

T. Keller, *The Reason for God*, Chapters One and Five.  
W.L. Craig, *On Guard*, Chapter Ten.  
**Discussion: Religious Pluralism**  
**Quiz #5**

### **Module 6: Truth and Postmodernism**

T. Keller, *The Reason for God*, Chapters Three and Four.  
W.L. Craig, *On Guard*, Chapter Eight.  
**Discussion: Truth and Postmodernism**  
**Quiz #6**

### **Module 7: Evidence for the Existence of God**

T. Keller, *The Reason for God*, Chapters Eight, Nine, and Ten.  
W.L. Craig, *On Guard*, Chapter Five.  
**Discussion: Evidence for God's Existence**  
**Quiz #7**

**Module 8: The Historicity of the Scriptures**

T. Keller, *The Reason for God*, Chapters Seven, Eleven and Twelve.

**Discussion: Historicity of the Bible**

**Quiz #8**

**Module 9: Jesus the Resurrected Messiah**

T. Keller, *The Reason for God*, Chapter Thirteen.

W.L. Craig, *On Guard*, Chapter Nine.

**Discussion: The Resurrection**

**Quiz #9**

**Module 10: Culture Issues in Apologetics**

Allberry, *Is God anti-gay?*, read the whole book, including the Introduction and Conclusion.

**Discussion: Christianity & Same-Sex Attraction**

**Quiz #10**

**Final Project Due**

**Percentage of All reading Assignments Completed Document**

**Course Grade**

Your course grade will be based on the following (there is also extra credit worth 2 points):

Discussions	10 points (1 each)	10%	(due during the assigned Week)
Quizzes	50 points	50%	(due during the assigned Week)
Reading Report	10 points	10%	(due Week 10 of class)
Final Project	30 points	30%	(due Week 10 of class)
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Total	100 points	100%	

**Grading Scale**

94-100	A
92-93	A-
90-91	B+
84-89	B
82-83	B-
80-81	C+
74-79	C
72-73	C-
0-71	No credit

\*You will need a grade of 72 or better to pass the course and obtain the required IBS credit.