

APOLOGETICS COURSE

Fall 2020

Course I: September 28, 2020 - World Views

Teacher: Brian Ondracek

External Study Resources:

<https://www.ligonier.org/blog/what-worldview/>

https://dpz73qkr83w0p.cloudfront.net/en_US/transcripts/WE102-01.pdf

OPTIONAL: <http://www.kgbc.us/documents/WorldviewGeisler-2009.pdf>

What you will Learn: This session will set the stage for the weeks ahead by setting a foundation for the importance of this study. Together, we will then journey into the world of world views by tackling questions like: What is a world view? How is one developed? What world views exist? Finally, we will wrestle with the question: Is a Christian world view the same as a biblical world view?

Course II: October 5, 2020 - The Origin of the Universe and the Remarkable Evidence for Design

Teacher: Jim Libby

Required Reading (You can download the links or read them online)

Collins, Francis S. "The Origins of the Universe." In *The Language of God: A Scientist Presents Evidence for Belief*, 57-84. New York: Free Press, 2007.

Link: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1yu_VwbgfDLdIYuT_qWU5GLrIsHtROAa/view?usp=sharing

Recommended Reading:

Libby, James A. "The Origin of the Universe and the Return of Design." In *Cultural Intercept*, 84. West Chicago, IL.: WorldView Resources, 2020.

PowerPoint Link: (Download this – Don't read it online).

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/11OllisEjWSrfY429NplCme77xe7wOOmU/view?usp=sharing>

PDF: Link:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1TELxod1ivJH9sMQulkdpUe1UeQnUTTWT/view?usp=sharing>

Ross, Hugh. "Probability for Life On Earth " No Pages. Online: <https://reasons.org/explore/blogs/todays-new-reason-to-believe/read/tnr/b/2004/04/01/probability-for-life-on-earth>.

Primary Literature (Technical):

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1qSQVCBDSYEIT5I7PYtDubUJRidlr7j9v/view?usp=sharing>

What you will learn:

In this session you will discover the set of remarkable scientific discoveries that began to be uncovered in the early 20th century in the fields of astronomy, physics, and cosmology. These findings demonstrate that a universe like ours is *extraordinarily improbable*. In fact, no less than 300 fundamental constants in physics must be very finely tuned for matter to exist and to allow the conditions for carbon-based life (us!) to exist. Once fully understood, there are only two reasonable conclusions: 1) that some virtually omnipotent creator exists, because as the Noble Laureate Fred Hoyle commented, someone has “monkeyed with the physics and chemistry” to make life possible or 2) That there are an infinite number of universes and we just happen to be in the one fit for life. But get ready! Buckle up! This will be a whirlwind tour of the galaxy – one that will equip you to explain both to your friends and family — and to your most hardened scientific friends — why the momentum of science has swung back toward the biblical view of a universe, *a universe that had a beginning*.

Note: the resources in this session come in two flavors:

- The Main Presentation (Secondary Literature). It is for Anyone: including “Joe Lunch Bucket”
- The Primary Literature: the actual scientific literature that discovered or explained these findings (for those with a background or a deep interest in science).

Additional topics will include:

- Opening Pandora’s Box: The 1974 physics article that let the Design Genie out of the bottle: (Brandon Carter)¹
- Design Argument #1: The fine tuning of constants in physics: the Anthropic Principle: (Tipler, Barrow, et. al.)²
 - The probability by chance alone of initial low entropy in our universe: 1 chance in $(10^{10})^{123}$ (Penrose)³
 - The probability by chance alone of physical constants that allow both stable matter AND chemistry: 1 chance in 10^{388} (Barrow and Tipler, John Polkinghorne, Arthur Peacocke, Hugh Ross, Alan Guth)⁴
- Design Argument #2: The fine tuning of 355 parameters of the galaxy, sun, earth, moon system to allow for life (Hugh Ross)⁵ See also Ross, H., “More Than a Theory”, 62-66.
- Design Argument #3: Mathematics can identify designed systems (contingency, complexity, specificity). The universe clearly meets those criteria (Dembski)⁶
- Design Argument #4: Why Dawkins (The Blind Watchmaker) is ...Um...Wrong. (Dembski)⁷

¹ Carter, “Large Number Coincidences and the Anthropic Principle In Cosmology,” 291-298.

² Barrow and Tipler, *The Anthropic Cosmological Principle*; Leslie, *Universes*; Polkinghorne, *Reason and Reality*, chapter 6; Polkinghorne, *Beyond Science*, chapter 6.

³ Penrose, *The Emperor’s New Mind*, 435-447.

⁴ Barrow and Tipler, *The Anthropic Cosmological Principle*, 288-354, 367-444; Barrow, *New Theories of Everything: The Quest for Ultimate Explanation*, 117-123; Polkinghorne, *The Faith of a Physicist*, 79; Ross, “Big Bang Model Refined by Fire,” 372-380; Guth, “Inflationary Universe,” 347. Ross calculates probability of these 55 parameters to be one chance in 10^{69} (Ross, “Big Bang Model Refined by Fire,” 380-381.).

⁵ The current 355 parameters yields one chance in 10^{388} per Ross, “Probability for Life On Earth ” <https://reasons.org/explore/blogs/todays-new-reason-to-believe/read/tnrtb/2004/04/01/probability-for-life-on-earth>: <https://reasons.org/explore/publications/tnrtb/read/tnrtb/2004/04/01/probability-for-life-on-earth>

⁶ Dembski and McDowell, *Understanding Intelligent Design*, 101-119; Dembski, *Intelligent Design*, 127-143.

⁷ Dembski, *The Design Inference*, 36-230.

- Design Argument #5: Uh oh. The Universe Has a Beginning (Why Many Philosophical Materialist Scientists Hate the Big Bang and Why Scientists with a Christian Worldview Love it) (Ross)⁸

Course III: October 12, 2020 - The Origin of Life and Evolution

Teacher: Jim Libby

Required Reading

Bradley, Walter L., and Charles B. Thaxon. "Information & the Origin Of Life." In *The Creation Hypothesis: Scientific Evidence for an Intelligent Designer*, edited by James Porter Moreland, 173-210. Downers Grove, IL.: InterVarsity Press, 2008.

Summary: This chapter interrogates that the adequacy of evolutionary theory in terms of its molecular biology, specifically the leap from simple small molecules to large bio-molecules (especially amino acids),, the assembly of those amino acids into proteins, the creation of stable DNA and RNA, the problems of self-organization as an explanation for the foregoing.

PDF: Link:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/10mrKlsTIVowNwm6OLgZun5hB9milLySo/view?usp=sharing>

Libby, James A. Bio-Origins: "You and the Primordial Goo". Cultural Intercept 7-8. West Chicago, IL.: WorldView Resources, 2020..

Summary: This work interrogates that the adequacy of evolutionary theory in general, and neo-darwinism in particular can be questioned using the standard disciplines commonly accepted by 21st century science; probability, molecular biology, genetics, anthropology, biochemistry, parasitology and paleontology.

PowerPoint Link:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1tkd8qLssF5aEXXSsU6Xm8c0wNcJM_lx6/view?usp=sharing

PDF: Link:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1S34CDyB7yRvwm4xF059IQqCGnU9NIpMU/view?usp=sharing>

Supplementary Reading in the Primary Literature (Written by Working Scientists Who are Christians)

Concerning the Fossil Record

Denton, Michael. "The Fossil Record." In *Evolution: A Theory in Crisis*, edited by Michael Denton, 157-198. London: Burnett, 1986.

PDF: Link: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/17OiZE-t2xJXEYkE-TwhUkZbVDRZPFqhA/view?usp=sharing>

Johnson, Phillip E. "The Fossil Problem." In *Darwin on Trial*, 45-62. Downers Grove, IL.: InterVarsity Press Books, 1991.

PDF: Link:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1pEybpKym8dHanMPrOGzIF1TO7kb6V6T/view?usp=sharing>

⁸ Ross, *The Fingerprint of God*, 53-138.

Concerning Molecular Biology

Denton, Michael. "The Molecular Biological Revolution." In *Evolution: A Theory in Crisis*, edited by Michael Denton, 233-248. London: Burnett, 1986.

PDF: Link: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1RWhuuX6pH1PAov2Y9Bjpx_izQ37xPM-P/view?usp=sharing

Johnson, Phillip E. "The Molecular Evidence." In *Darwin on Trial*, 88-101. Downers Grove, IL.: InterVarsity Press Books, 1991.

PDF: Link:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/19Nky1ld6qW70spj1YEecRcl8E6QJj_il/view?usp=sharing

Links to the Primary Literature (Written by Working Scientists)

Links to the primary scientific literature: PDF: Link:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1q5gmmljJnMI7w6uDqunGNWNieJkflMs9/view?usp=sharing>

(May not be available until Oct 7)

What you will learn:

In this session you will discover the set of remarkable scientific discoveries that began to be uncovered in the early 20th century in the fields of biology, biochemistry and genetics...just to name a few. These findings demonstrate that the creation of biological life is *extraordinarily improbable* and make the theory of evolution as it is typically taught in the public schools (Neo-Darwinianism) deeply problematic. This session will get you inside the theory of evolution to understand that is actually a very good theory, *but it is also an inadequate one* because of comprehensive and systemic problems. But, as before, buckle up! This will be a whirlwind tour of the biological realm – one that will equip you to explain both to your friends and family — and to your most hardened scientific friends — why biology too, provides a remarkable evidence for design.

Specific topics will include

- The problems of the jump from non-life to life:
 - The challenge of creating ALL the required bio-molecules not just a few (the Stanley Miller experiment).
 - The challenge of the jump from bio-molecules to a replicating life
 - The challenge of protein synthesis: how did it start? (de Noyes, Hoyle)
 - The challenge of self-organization: (Bass & Cech)⁹
- The problems of the Neo-Darwinian (ND) synthesis (what our kids are taught in grade and high school)
 - Against gradualism:
 - The problem of the fossil record: The lack of transitional forms (Philip Johnson)

⁹ The Stanley Miller experiment (1953) demonstrated the synthesis of amino acids in a reducing atmosphere () and Bass and Cech (1984) demonstrated self-replication of RNA (Cech and Bass, "Specific Interaction Between the Self-Splicing RNA of Tetrahymena and Its Guanosine Substrate," 820-826). Problematically however,

- The problem of the Cambrian/Precambrian explosion: at the Cambrian/Precambrian boundary biodiversity went from 3 phyla to 53 phyla in 10 million years!
- The problem admitted: evolution changes from Neo-Darwinianism to Punctuated Equilibria theory (N. Eldredge and S.J. Gould)
- Against successive changes that confer adaptive advantage:
 - The challenge of irreducible complexity: e.g. bacterial flagella, complement/blood clotting cascade. (Michal Behe)
- Against large-scale speciation
- Against mutation as a directing force of genetic variation (Lynn Margulis)
- Against paleontology as a support for Neo-Darwinianism: poor internal consistency.
- The Design Inference in Biology, Biochemistry, and Genetics: (Michael Denton, Francis Collins)¹⁰

Course IV: October 19, 2020 - The Uniqueness of the Bible

Teacher: Ed Evans

REVISED 10-1-20 - We have elected to use blended media – please see the section “what you will learn / discuss” and then read - watch enough of the videos / articles/ text so that you can become conversant and participate. We would estimate that there are 10+/- hours of video and material to view / read – so please so not wait until the last minute. (NOTE YOU WILL HAVE TO COPY AND PASTE THE LINKS HEREIN AS THEY DID NOT CONVEY AS LIVE)

SOME OF THE VIDEOS COVER THE SAME GROUND BUT ALL OF THE MATERIAL IS ADDITIVE

Study Resources

<https://www.bethinking.org/is-christianity-true/the-evidence-for-christianity> CRAIG HOW DO I PROVE CHRISTIANITY IS TRUE

<https://christianity.net.au/questions/why-is-christianity-the-true-religion> CHRISTIANITY.NET

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gFFHafAi1jg> ONE TRUE FAITH

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o5qJPZySo7A> ONE TRUTH FAITH RAVI ZACHARIAS

Chapters – pages from your books

Reasonable Faith chapter 1; pgs. 29-50 / chapter 3; pgs. 93-100 / Conclusion; pgs. 405 – 307

Evidence for God – Dembski / Licona chapters 2, 5, 6, 7, 42, 43

Tactics – Koukl (the entire book is good to help you enter the conversation – it’s a long read; if time is short please see the Koukl video link included here in

¹⁰ Denton, *Nature's Destiny*; Collins, *The Language of God*,

Bible inerrancy / Apologetics

<https://www.cedarville.edu/center-for-biblical-apologetics-and-public-christianity/conferences/god-revealed-conference> AL MOHLER- GOD REVEALED - VIDEOS

<https://www.cedarville.edu/center-for-biblical-apologetics-and-public-christianity/conferences/tactics-conference> GREGG KOUKL – TACTICS VIDEO

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8n_cWZZzsec SPROUL VIDEO - - DEFENDING THE DOCTRINE OF INERRANCY VIDEO

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kHTZrxHB-so> MOHLER, SPROUL, SPROUL JR., ZACHARIAS - VIDEO

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n6lqZgcGIN0> MOHLER / THE BIBLE IS GODS WORD – VIDEO

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gFFHafAi1jg> ONE TRUE FAITH VIDEO

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o5qJPZySo7A> ONE TRUTH FAITH RAVI ZACHARIAS VIDEO

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aPtGVtCOILE> MACARTHUR VIDEO “CHRISTIANS WHO DENY INERRANCY”

<https://defendinginerrancy.com/why-is-inerrancy-important/> ARTICLE

<https://www.theolatte.com/2020/09/surrendered-reason-isnt-unreasonable/> / DEWITT BLOG / SURRENDERED REASON ISN'T UNREASONABLE

<https://www.theolatte.com/2019/11/c-s-lewis-on-making-sense-of-the-human-experience/> / CS LEWIS BLOG / MAKING SENSE OF THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE

<https://www.namb.net/apologetics/resource/how-should-we-use-the-bible-in-apologetics/> DEWITT – HOW TO USE THE BIBLE IN APOLOGETICS – ARTICLE

What you will learn / discuss:

In this session you will learn to use the Bible as your primary and tactical outreach and apologetical tool. We will examine the ‘Sword of the Spirit’ which is the Word of God Ephesians 6:17.

Specific topics will include

- Uniqueness of the Bible – Inerrancy
 - Does God Exist
 - Is Christianity the one true faith
 - The problem with evil
 - The problem of suffering
 - How to share with Post Modern Millennials Mormons, Jehovah Witnesses, Muslims, Catholics
 - Combatting seeming inconsistencies in the Bible
 - Moving from content to conversation
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Course V: October 26, 2020 - The Uniqueness of the Person of Jesus Christ Part 1: The Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ

Teachers: John Appleton & Dave Wiggins

External Study Resources:

“Evidence for God”- Dembski, Licona-chapters 33-36, pages 164-178

“Reasonable Faith”- William Lane Craig- chapter 8 on the Resurrection of Jesus-pages 333-400. WLC is considered by many the leading Christian apologist in the world today. His website reasonablefaith.org is a treasure trove of information on apologetics.

Listen to a debate with a young William Lane Craig and atheist Philip Atkins on the resurrection. Moderated by the late William Buckley.

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=fhNHuRkWEhs>

Listen to Gary Habermas teach on the minimal facts argument for the resurrection of Jesus from UCSB university. Most regard Gary as the leading North American expert on the resurrection. His website is garyhabermas.com tons of great info there as well.

https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=ay_Db4RwZ_M

Watch the movie “The Case for Christ” telling the true story of an atheist newspaper reporter(Lee Strobel) attempting to disprove the resurrection. You should be able to rent this on Netflix.

What you will learn: In this study on the uniqueness of Christ we will focus on the primacy of the resurrection to the Christian faith. We will look at how to have an evidence based discussion in regards to the bodily resurrection of Christ, we will look at one of the earliest creeds of the church, get a better understanding of how oral tradition worked and functioned, and explain the minimal facts argument for the resurrection that Gary Habermas has advocated for. The end result would be for each of us to better be able to defend and explain why Christ is our living hope.

Course V: October 26, 2020 - The Uniqueness of the Person of Jesus Christ Part 2: Will the Real Jesus Please Stand Up?

Teacher: David A Wiggins

External Study Sources:

Evidence for God- Maier chapter 27, Did Jesus Really Exist?; Bock Chapter 29 The Son of Man; Witherington III, chapter 30, The Son of God

Reasonable Faith- William Lane Craig- chapter 7, The Self Understanding of Jesus – 287-296

What you will learn: You will learn about the historical Jesus Christ and what he believed about himself and what others believed about him. Further, you will learn how to defend (apologia) the real Jesus against those who desire to create a Jesus in their own ideological images.

A brief outline of the presentation:

- Jesus and the Enlightenment
 - The First Quest for the Historical Jesus: Who let the “Dogma” out?
 - The Second Quest for the Historical Jesus: The Burden of Proof?
 - The Third Quest for the Historical Jesus: So Jesus was Jewish? Oy Vey!
 - The Danger of Anachronism
 - The Real Jesus is already “Standing Up!”
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Course VI: November 2, 2020 - Implications of the Gospel for Social Action (Part 1)

Teachers: Genzo Yamamoto and Enoch Haven

External Study Resources: Readings for Class

1. **CFR:** Art Lindsley, “Creation, Fall, Redemption,” https://www.cslewisinstitute.org/Creation_Fall_Redemption_FullArticle. (~4pp)
 2. **Shalom:** Nicholas Wolterstorff, “For Justice in Shalom,” *Until Justice and Peace Embrace*. (PDF provided) (~4pp)
 3. **CFR, Humility:** Vincent J. Donovan, Excerpts from “A Time to Speak and a Time to Act,” *Christianity Rediscovered*. (~5pp)
 4. **Kingdom:** Excerpts from Bradshaw Frey, *All of Life Redeemed*. [TBD]
 5. **Preaching the Gospel and Living Out the Gospel in a Fallen World:** Kaitlyn Schiess, Excerpts from *The Liturgy of Politics*. (PDF provided)
- B. For those who want to dig deeper, we recommend–**
1. **CFR:** Al Wolters, *Creation Regained*; Cornelius Plantinga, *Engaging God’s World*; for **Shalom:** TBD; **Kingdom:** Tim Keller, *Every Good Endeavor: Connecting Your Work to God’s Work*; Amy Sherman, *Kingdom Calling: Vocational Stewardship for the Common Good*. **Examples:** David Koyzis, *Political Visions and Illusions: A Survey and Christian Critique of Contemporary Ideologies*.

What you will learn:

The participant will be given a chance to think through issues of social engagement through the three important Biblical lenses of Creation-Fall-Redemption, Shalom, and the Kingdom of God; and have a chance to run various exercises practicing how these themes can be made practical in discussions.

Course VII: November 9, 2020 - Implications of the Gospel for Social Action (Part 2)

Teachers: Genzo Yamamoto and Enoch Haven

External Study Resources:

A. Readings for Class

1. **Evaluating Theories:** Tim Keller, "A Biblical Critique of Secular Justice and Critical Theory" <https://quarterly.gospelinlife.com/a-biblical-critique-of-secular-justice-and-critical-theory/> (20pp)
 2. **Racism:** John Perkins, "The Whole Gospel," from *Let Justice Roll Down* (PDF provided). (12pp)
 3. **Poverty:** Tim Keller, "Who Is My Neighbor?" *Ministries of Mercy: The Call of the Jericho Road*. (15pp)
 4. **Immigration and National Identity:** David Koyzis, "Nationalism: The Jealous God of Nation," *Political Visions and Illusions* (~25pp); Michael Peppard, "Mike Pence's Idolatrous RNC Speech," *Commonweal* (<https://www.commonwealmagazine.org/old-glory-god>). (3pp)
- B. For those who want to dig deeper**
1. **Racism:** Jemar Tisby, *The Color of Compromise: The Truth of the American Church's Complicity in Racism* (Zondervan: 2019); Christian Smith and Michael O. Emerson *Divided by Faith: Evangelical Religion and the Problem of Race in America*; John Perkins, *With Justice for All: A Strategy for Community Development*; John Perkins, *Commissioned to Love: Living Out the Whole Gospel*.
 2. **Poverty:** Ann Bradley and Art Lindsley, eds. *For the Least of These: A Biblical Answer to Poverty*; Robert Lupton, *Compassion, Justice, and the Christian Life: Rethinking Ministry to the Poor*; Brian Fikkert, *When Helping Hurts: How to Alleviate Poverty Without Hurting the Poor*; Tim Keller, *Ministries of Mercy: The Call of the Jericho Road*.
 3. **Nationalism:** Robert Bellah, "Civil Religion in America," (http://www.robertbellah.com/articles_5.htm); Braden Anderson, "Chosen Nation: Biblical Theopolitics and the Problem of American Christian Nationalism" (https://epublications.marquette.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://www.google.com/&httpsredir=1&article=1063&context=dissertations_mu).

What you will learn:

The participant will have a chance to review the biblical/theological foundations presented in the first class; reflect on the spiritual skills useful for engaging critics; and be exposed to biblical passages and scholarship that address the topic of poverty, racism, and immigration.