

SHEFFEY SCHOOL OF THE BIBLE

*A Ministry of Freedom Tabernacle Baptist Church
Atkins, Virginia*

Course: APO-301 Presuppositional Apologetics

Week 1 Student Handout

THE ROBBERY OF NEUTRALITY & THE IMMORALITY OF NEUTRALITY

Instructor: _____

Student Name: _____

Date: _____

WHAT YOU SHOULD LEARN FROM TODAY'S LECTURE

- Define apologetics.
- Define presupposition.
- Explain why neutrality is impossible.
- Explain why Bahnsen rejects neutrality.
- Understand Christ's relationship to knowledge.
- Explain why neutrality is immoral.
- Understand the concept of worldview.
- Describe how Christian thinking differs from unbelieving thinking.

I. INTRODUCTION TO PRESUPPOSITIONAL APOLOGETICS

Key Principle

Every person approaches truth through presuppositions.

Short Explanation

All reasoning begins with foundational assumptions. Christians begin with God's revelation while unbelievers begin with other ultimate authorities.

Notes

II. THE DEMAND FOR NEUTRALITY

Key Principle

The world's demand for neutrality rejects Christ's authority.

Short Explanation

Modern society often demands that Christians suspend biblical commitments in order to participate in education, scholarship, and apologetics.

Notes

III. CHRIST AS THE FOUNDATION OF ALL KNOWLEDGE

Key Principle

All true knowledge is grounded in Jesus Christ.

KJV Scripture

Colossians 2:3

"In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."

Short Explanation

All truth finds its ultimate source in Christ. Knowledge cannot be properly understood apart from Him.

Notes

IV. THE IMMORALITY OF NEUTRALITY

Key Principle

Neutrality obscures the distinction between truth and unbelief.

KJV Scripture

John 17:17

"Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."

Short Explanation

God's truth sets believers apart from the world. Christians must not suppress biblical truth in order to appear neutral.

Notes

V. THE CHRISTIAN MIND

Key Principle

Every thought must be submitted to Christ.

KJV Scripture

2 Corinthians 10:5

"Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;"

- Christ is the foundation of knowledge.
- Neutrality obscures Christian distinctives.
- Neutrality suppresses biblical truth.
- Believers are sanctified by truth.
- God's Word is truth.
- Christians possess a renewed mind.
- Every thought must be brought into obedience to Christ.
- A worldview influences reasoning.
- Christ is Lord over all knowledge.
- Biblical apologetics begins with God's authority.
- Human autonomy is rejected.
- Presuppositions influence conclusions.
- Christian thinking differs from unbelieving thinking.
- Scripture is the ultimate authority.

ASSIGNMENT

Read Week 2 material:

- Chapter 3 — *The Nature of Unbelieving Thought*
- Chapter 4 — *The Mind of the New Man Rooted in Christ*

Come prepared to discuss how Scripture describes unbelieving reasoning and how the Christian mind differs from the natural mind.

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COURSE SYLLABUS

Course Number: APO-301

Course Title: Presuppositional Apologetics

Instructor: ____

Semester: ____

Credit Hours: 3

COURSE DESCRIPTION

APO-301 Presuppositional Apologetics provides a biblical and practical study of the defense of the Christian faith through the presuppositional method presented in Greg L. Bahnsen's *Always Ready: Directions for Defending the Faith*.

The course examines the impossibility of neutrality, the Lordship of Christ over all knowledge, the necessity of divine revelation, the authority of Scripture, the nature of unbelief, common ground, worldview analysis, and the biblical method of answering unbelieving thought.

Special attention is given to the practical application of presuppositional apologetics in evangelism, ministry, Christian discipleship, and interaction with competing worldviews.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK

Greg L. Bahnsen, *Always Ready: Directions for Defending the Faith*.

Students are expected to complete the assigned textbook readings associated with each portion of the course.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of APO-301, students should be able to:

1. Define presuppositional apologetics and explain its biblical foundation.

2. Explain why intellectual neutrality is impossible.
 3. Define presuppositions and explain their role in human reasoning.
 4. Explain the Lordship of Jesus Christ over knowledge and thought.
 5. Describe the necessity of divine revelation for human knowledge.
 6. Explain the self-attesting authority of Scripture.
 7. Describe the biblical teaching concerning man's knowledge of God and suppression of truth.
 8. Explain the biblical point of contact between the believer and unbeliever.
 9. Analyze competing worldviews from a presuppositional perspective.
 10. Explain Bahnsen's two-fold apologetic procedure.
 11. Explain why God's Word must be the Christian's ultimate starting point.
 12. Describe the relationship between faith and understanding.
 13. Explain the role of God's sovereignty in apologetics and conversion.
 14. Apply presuppositional apologetics to evangelism, ministry, and Christian witness.
 15. Defend the Christian faith with biblical conviction, meekness, and dependence upon God.
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COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Students are expected to:

- Attend and participate in scheduled lectures.
- Complete all assigned textbook readings.
- Follow the weekly Student Handouts and retain the "Things to Know/Exam Anchors."
- Participate in classroom discussion.
- Complete Exam One.
- Complete Exam Two.
- Demonstrate academic honesty throughout the course.

There is no required research paper or writing assignment for this course.

COURSE GRADING

Exam One — 50%

Exam Two — 50%

Total — 100%

Each examination contains a required reading-verification question worth **25% of that individual examination grade.**

GRADING SCALE

A: 90–100
B: 80–89
C: 70–79
D: 60–69
F: Below 60

EXAMINATION FORMAT

Both examinations contain:

- Multiple-Choice Questions
- True/False Questions
- At least 50 total questions
- One assigned-reading verification question
- Reading verification worth 25% of the examination grade

Students should pay particular attention to the **Things to Know (Exam Anchors)** contained in the weekly Teaching Outlines and Student Handouts.

COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK 1

Foundations of Presuppositional Apologetics

Topics Include:

- Introduction to Presuppositional Apologetics
- The Robbery of Neutrality
- The importance of presuppositions
- Christ's authority over Christian thinking

Reading: Assigned opening chapters of *Always Ready*

WEEK 2

Neutrality and Christian Presuppositions

Topics Include:

- The Myth of Neutrality
- The Necessity of Christian Presuppositions
- Autonomous human reasoning
- Biblical thinking versus unbelieving thought

Reading: Assigned chapters of *Always Ready*

WEEK 3

Christ, Knowledge, and Revelation

Topics Include:

- The Lordship of Christ Over Knowledge
- The Necessity of Revelation
- Christ as the foundation of wisdom and knowledge
- God's revelation as necessary for understanding reality

Reading: Assigned chapters of *Always Ready*

WEEK 4

Objections to Presuppositionalism

Topics Include:

- Three Arguments Against Presuppositionalism
- Humble Boldness, Not Obscurantist Arrogance
- The charge of dogmatism
- Unbelieving knowledge
- The Christian attitude in apologetics

Reading: Assigned chapters of *Always Ready*

WEEK 5

Revelation, Knowledge, and Common Ground

Topics Include:

- Inescapable Revelation
- Inescapable Knowledge
- Common Ground Which Is Not Neutral
- The image of God
- The suppression of truth

Reading: Assigned chapters of *Always Ready*

WEEK 6

The Biblical Point of Contact

Topics Include:

- Where Point of Contact Is, and Is Not, Found
- Overall Summary of Chapters 1–11
- God's revelation as the true point of contact
- Review of foundational presuppositional principles

Reading: Chapters 11–12 and review of Chapters 1–12

EXAM ONE

Coverage: Chapters 1–12

Format:

- Multiple Choice
- True/False
- Reading Verification

Reading Verification: Students will certify whether they completed the assigned reading for Chapters 1–12. This question is worth **25% of the Exam One grade**.

Exam One = 50% of the final course grade.

WEEK 7

The Foolishness of Unbelief and the Apologetic Procedure

Topics Include:

- The Foolishness of Unbelief
- A Two-Fold Apologetic Procedure
- Internal inconsistency within unbelieving worldviews
- Negative and positive apologetics

Reading: Chapters 13–14

WEEK 8

Answering Unbelief and Worldview Collision

Topics Include:

- Answering the Fool
- Worldviews in Collision
- Proverbs 26:4–5
- Internal critique
- Christian and unbelieving worldviews

Reading: Chapters 15–16

WEEK 9

God's Word as the Ultimate Starting Point

Topics Include:

- The Ultimate Starting Point: God's Word
- Summary of Apologetic Method
- Ultimate authority
- The self-attesting nature of Scripture
- Christ's Lordship over thought

Reading: Chapters 17–18

WEEK 10

Faith, Understanding, and God's Sovereignty

Topics Include:

- God Must Sovereignly Grant Understanding
- One Must Believe in Order to Understand
- Strategy Guided by the Nature of Belief
- The limitations of fallen human reasoning
- The relationship between apologetics and evangelism

Reading: Chapters 19–21

WEEK 11

The Presuppositional Defense of the Christian Faith

Topics Include:

- Comprehensive synthesis of presuppositional apologetics
- The Lordship of Christ over knowledge
- Revelation as the foundation of knowledge
- The nature of unbelief
- The conflict of worldviews
- The two-fold apologetic method
- The goal of apologetics

Reading: Review of *Always Ready*

WEEK 12

The Legacy and Practical Ministry of Presuppositional Apologetics

Topics Include:

- Why presuppositional apologetics matters
- Apologetics and evangelism
- Apologetics and the local church
- Apologetics and culture
- Continuing growth as a Christian thinker
- Final charge to the Christian apologist

Reading: Comprehensive review of assigned material

EXAM TWO

Coverage: Chapters 13–21 and major course-synthesis material from Weeks 11–12

Format:

- Multiple Choice
- True/False
- Reading Verification

Reading Verification: Students will certify whether they completed the assigned reading for Chapters 13–21. This question is worth **25% of the Exam Two grade**.

Exam Two = 50% of the final course grade.

READING REQUIREMENT

Reading is an important component of APO-301. Students should complete the assigned portions of *Always Ready* as the course progresses rather than relying exclusively upon lecture material.

Each examination contains a reading-verification question worth **25 points out of the 100-point examination grade**.

Students should answer this question truthfully as a matter of Christian and academic integrity.

WRITING ASSIGNMENT

No research paper or formal writing assignment is required for APO-301.

The course grade is determined by the two examinations and their incorporated reading requirements.

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

Regular attendance is expected. Because the Teaching Outlines, Student Handouts, classroom explanations, and discussions work together, students should make every effort to attend each scheduled class session.

Students are encouraged to participate in discussions and ask questions concerning the apologetic principles being studied.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students of Sheffey School of the Bible are expected to demonstrate Christian character and academic honesty.

Cheating, knowingly providing false information concerning assigned reading, or other forms of academic dishonesty are inconsistent with both Christian conduct and the standards of the school.

Students are expected to complete examinations honestly and represent their reading completion truthfully.

BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION

APO-301 approaches apologetics from a conservative Baptist and biblical perspective. Scripture is recognized as the authoritative Word of God and the ultimate standard by which truth claims, worldviews, philosophies, and human reasoning are evaluated.

The King James Version (KJV) is used for Scripture throughout course instruction and materials.

COURSE PHILOSOPHY

Presuppositional apologetics is more than a method for winning arguments. It is an application of the Lordship of Jesus Christ to human thought.

The Christian apologist must therefore refuse intellectual neutrality, stand upon the authority of God's revelation, expose the inconsistencies of unbelieving thought, and faithfully proclaim biblical truth.

Apologetics should always be practiced with conviction, humility, meekness, and a desire to point others toward Jesus Christ.

COURSE CONCLUSION

Upon completion of APO-301 Presuppositional Apologetics, students should possess a foundational understanding of Greg L. Bahnsen's presuppositional approach to defending the Christian faith.

Students should be equipped to recognize the presuppositions underlying competing worldviews, explain why biblical revelation is necessary for knowledge, expose the inconsistencies of unbelieving thought, and defend the Christian faith while remaining faithful to the authority of Scripture.

The ultimate goal of the course is not simply that students become better arguers, but that they become more faithful Christian thinkers and witnesses who are prepared to:

"Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer..." — 1 Peter 3:15 (KJV)