



SPRING ARBOR UNIVERSITY

The Christian Faith: Biblical History and Literature
CORE 300 Fall 2008

Charles Edward White, Ph.D., Instructor

Office: Old History House Phone: 1389 Office hour: F 12:15-1:15

Email: cwhite@arbor.edu Website: myweb.arbor.edu/cwhite

This document is not an offer and is subject to change.

Objective:

To foster a more adequate knowledge and understanding of the literature, history, and faith of the Bible as it influences the Christian community and Western culture, and to nurture appreciation of the rich resources of the Scriptures for creative personal faith and life in the modern world.

Specifically, the student who successfully completes CORE 300 will be able to:

1. Identify the major events and people in the Bible.
2. Explain the Bible's teaching in the areas of God, humanity, morality, salvation, and culture.
3. Explain sound hermeneutical principles for interpreting the Bible and applying its teaching to the contemporary issues of
 - a. Pain and suffering
 - b. Social evil, oppression, and injustice
 - c. Resources and ecology
 - d. Variant perspectives
 - e. Sexuality and gender roles
4. Understand and criticize contemporary culture from a Christian perspective.

Texts

1. The Bible. We will be using the NIV in this course.
2. Charles Colson, *How Now Shall We Live?* ("C" in Schedule and Assignments)
3. Chuck Miller, *Getting to Know the Book of the Christian* ("M" in Schedule and Assignments)
4. Philip J. Sampson, *Six Modern Myths*

Methodology

Quizzes and hour exams

Because the value of attending class is often proportional to the amount of preparation the student has done before class, each class will begin with a exercise designed to reward those students who have prepared for that class. Doing well on this reward exercise or "quiz" is necessary for the successful completion of the class; an average of 75% is a prerequisite for passing. Besides the daily quizzes, two hour exams will measure the students' mastery of the content of the course.

Reading project

Instead of the standard research paper, students will engage in a reading project of their own design. Over the course of the semester they will read 400 standard pages (350 words per page) from books on the included list in addition to the book by Philip Sampson. If students wish to read a title not included on the list, they must get prior approval from the instructor. Students may not reread books, nor may they read books used in their other classes. Three times during the semester students will submit a 500-word paper reporting what they have read and summarizing it. The average of these three grades will be the report grade. Then at the end of the semester, students will submit a 1250-word paper responding to what they have read. These response papers may take several forms. They could state and evaluate new ideas learned. They could explain how the readings influenced the students' lives. They could refute or confirm one of the arguments presented. They could compare the various readings. The only requirement for these papers is that they be well-written and show that the students have seriously engaged the thinking of the authors they have read.

Final Exam

The purpose of the final exam is for the students to show that they can use the knowledge they have gained during the course to solve new problems. Thus the exam will evaluate the students' abilities to respond to different moral or cultural issues from a Christian perspective. The exam is posted on the website.

Grades

The final grade will be determined by four factors: the quizzes and hour exams, the reports of the reading project, the response to the reading project, and the final exam. In order to be eligible to submit the reading project and to take the final exam, a student must maintain a 75% average on the quizzes and hour exams. A student who notifies the instructor that she will miss a class at least two days in advance in writing may take that quiz early without penalty. A student who misses a class without giving the instructor the required notice and misses a quiz may take a make-up after a payment of \$10 to the Childcare Ministry of the Free Methodist Church.

The instructor reserves the right to investigate suspected cheating, plagiarism, or other forms of dishonesty by any means he deems necessary, including retesting the student. The instructor will be the sole judge in any case of suspected dishonesty, and reserves the right to determine the punishment when he is convinced the student has been dishonest. The normal penalty for dishonesty is to fail the course.

The quizzes, reading reports, response and the exam will each make up 1/4 of the final grade. An average on the quizzes of 0-74% will be worth no points, 75-79% .25 points, 80-84% .5 points, 85-89 .75 points, and 89-100% 1 point. For the reading reports, the response, and the exam, F = 0, D = .25, C = .5, B = .75, and A = 1. For the final grade 3.75 points are necessary for an A, 3.5 for an A-, 3.25 for a B+, 3 for a B, 2.75 for a B-, 2.5 for a C+, 2 for a C, 1.75 for a C-, and 1.5 for a D.

College policy permits no student more than 4 absences from this course without penalty. Additional absences may result in a reduction of the final grade at the discretion of the instructor. Late work may be accepted at the discretion of the instructor, usually with a 50% discount for each class session missed.

The instructor expects proper behavior and attire in the class. Eating and drinking are not allowed, nor are hats, muscle shirts, or other clothing which detracts from the seriousness of academic endeavor.

Schedule and Assignments (may be modified if necessary)

Sep 5	Darwin, Marx, & Freud		
Sep 8	Postmodernism	M 1, Genesis 1-12	20 point quiz
Sep 10	Theism: The very beginning	M 2, Exodus 1-20	20 point quiz
Sep 12	Theism: Liberty and law	M 3, Judges 2-4, 19-20	20 point quiz
Sep 15	Theism: Lawless liberty	M 4, 2 Sam 11-13, Isa 1-2	20 point quiz
Sep 17	Theism: Liberty under law	M 5, Hosea 1-14	20 point quiz

Sep 19	Naturalism: Carl Sagan's <i>Cosmos</i>		20 point quiz	
Sep 22	Colson 1		20 point quiz	
Sep 24	Colson 2		30 point quiz	
Sep 26	Colson 3	M 6-9, C Introduction through 4	20 point quiz	
Sep 29	Theism: The jilted lover	M 10, Romans 1-8	20 point quiz	Reading report
Oct 1	Theism: How God saves us	M 11, C 5-6	30 point quiz	
Oct 3	First unit exam and Naturalism: Bertrand Russell's argument against God	M 12, C 7-8	176 point exam and 30 point quiz	
Oct 6	Naturalism: Bertrand Russell's Argument against Jesus	M 13, C 9-10	30 point quiz	
Oct 8	Naturalism: Bertrand Russell's <i>A Free Man's Worship</i>	M 14, C 11-12	30 point quiz	
Oct 10	Review for second unit exam	M 15-16, C 13-14	176 point exam and 40 point quiz	
Oct 13	Second unit exam and Abortion in America	M 17	10 point quiz	
Oct 15	Naturalism: More <i>Cosmos</i>	M 18	10 point quiz	Reading report
Oct 20	Naturalism: <i>Privileged Planet</i>	C 15-18	40 point quiz	
Oct 22	Naturalism: Johnson-Provine debate I			
Oct 24	Naturalism: Johnson-Provine debate II	M 19-20, C 19-22	60 point quiz	
Oct 27	Naturalism: Scientific evidence for God	M 21, C 23	20 point quiz	
Oct 29	Review for unit exam	M 22, C 24-25	30 point quiz	
Oct 31	Third unit exam and Evidential argument for the truth of Christianity I	M 23, C 26-27	176 point exam and 30 point quiz	
Nov 3	Evidential argument for Christianity II	M 24, C 28-29	30 point quiz	
Nov 5	The rise and fall of Western thought	M 25	10 point quiz	Reading report
Nov 7	Bankruptcy of Humanism	M 26, C 30-31	30 point quiz	
Nov 10	Review for unit exam	M 27, C 32-33	30 point quiz	
Nov 12	Fourth unit exam and How another really bad guy got saved	M 28, C 34-35	176 point exam and 30 point quiz	
Nov 14	The Difference One Family Can Make	M 29, C 36-37	30 point quiz	
Nov 17	Who are the Wretched of the Earth?	M 30, C 38-39	30 point quiz	
Nov 19	<i>Transformations</i>	M 31, C 40-41	30 point quiz	

Nov 21	<i>Transformations II</i>	M 32,C 42-44	30 point quiz	
Nov 23	<i>Hiding Place</i>	M 33, C 45	20 point quiz	
Dec 1	<i>Hiding Place</i>	M 34	10 point quiz	Reading reaction
Dec 3	<i>Hiding Place</i> and review for unit exam	M 35	10 point quiz	
Dec 5	Fifth unit exam and review for final	M 36	176 point exam and 10 point quiz	
Dec 9	Further review for final			
Dec 12	Final exam 8-10 am			

Approved Books by Topic

Apologetics

Basic Christianity
The Best Things in Life
Between Heaven & Hell
Black Man's Religion
C. S. Lewis & Francis Schaeffer
Can We Be Good Without God?
Chris Chrisman Goes to College
Christian Apologetics in the Postmodern World
Defending Black Faith
Escape from Reason
Engaging Unbelief
Evangelism Made Slightly Less Difficult
The God Who Is There
Handbook of Christian Apologetics
In Defense of Miracles
Jesus for a New Generation
Jesus' Resurrection: Fact or Figment?
Know Why You Believe
Mere Christianity
Miracles
Never Beyond Hope
Professors Who Believe
The Problem of Pain
The Question of God: Freud & Lewis
Seven Myths About Christianity
This Rebellious House
Why Should Anyone Believe Anything at All

Counseling & Psychology

Authentic Human Sexuality
Christian Counseling Ethics
Coming Out of Homosexuality
Divorce & Remarriage
Eros Defiled
Eros Redeemed
Equal to the Task
Family Ministry
Freud vs. God
The Healing Journey for Adult Children of Alcoholics
Healing Conversations

Marriage Counseling
Modern Psychotherapies
Released from Shame
Restoring the Fallen
Straight & Narrow?
To Forgive Is Human
Why Do Christians Shoot Their Wounded?

Cultural Critique

A Little Handbook on Having a Soul
The American Leadership Tradition: Moral Vision from
Washington to Clinton
American Militias
Are You Politically Correct?
Beyond Family Values
C. S. Lewis & Francis Schaeffer
Chris Chrisman Goes to College
Christian Apologetics in the Postmodern World
The Consuming Passion
Doomsday Delusions
Exit with Honor
Families at the Crossroads
Freud vs. God
Generating Hope
A Generation Alone
The God Who Is There
God and Caesar
Gods That Fail
Gospel Virtues
Habits of the Mind
How the News Makes Us Dumb
Life at the Bottom
Life on the Vine
Losing Ground
Mindsiege
Renewing American Compassion
The Tragedy of American Compassion
The Transforming Vision
Truth Decay
Truth Is Stranger Than It Used to Be
Uncommon Decency

The Universe Next Door
When Tolerance Is No Virtue
Written on the Heart

Education

Being a Christian in Science
Confessions of a Beginning Theologian
Defeating Darwinism by Opening Minds
Discipleship of the Mind
The Fabric of Faithfulness
Freefall of the American University
None Dare Call It Education
Professors Who Believe
Reason in the Balance
The Transforming Vision
What They Don't Always Teach You at a Christian College

Evangelism

Engaging Unbelief
Evangelical Truth
Evangelism & the Sovereignty of God
Evangelistic Preaching That Connects
How to Give Away Your Faith
An Intrusive Gospel?
Jesus for a New Generation
The Mark of the Christian
Reinventing Evangelism
Tell the Truth

Gender Studies

Distorting Scripture
Equal to the Task
Gender & Grace
Grand Illusions: The Legacy of Planned Parenthood
Kinsey: Crime and Consequences
Homosexuality and American Public Life
Men at the Crossroads
Ministry at the Margins
Same Sex Matters: The challenge of homosexuality
Taking Sex Differences Seriously
Woman and the Word of God
Women at the Crossroads
Women in Ministry
Women in the Church
Women in the Maze
Women, Authority & the Bible

Health & Medicine

Called to Care
A Different Death
Spiritual Dimensions of Mental Health
The Spiritual Needs of Children
Values in Conflict

Multiethnic Studies

Black man's Religion

Cross-Cultural Conflict
Defending Black Faith
Diverse Worship
Free At Last
The Gospel in Black and White
The Hispanic Challenge
Ministry at the Margins
No Easy Walk
One New people
Paved with Good Intentions
Strange Virtues
Where the Nations Meet

Philosophy & Ethics

Being Human
Beyond Bumper Sticker Ethics
Beyond Family Values Body & Soul ,
Can We Be Good Without God?
The Case for Freewill Theism
Christian Counseling Ethics
Christianity & Western Thought (Volume 1)
Christianity & Western Thought (Volume 2)
Contours of Christian Philosophy
A Different Death
Discipleship of the Mind
Epistemology
Ethics (CCP)
Evil & the Cross
The Fall of Interpretation
Final Wishes
Gods That Fail
The Gospel in Black & White
Gospel Virtues
In Defense of Miracles
Jesus & the Restoration of Israel
Just Business
Knowing with the Heart
Mere Creation
Metaphysics (CCP)
The Moral Quest
Objections Sustained
Philosophers Who Believe
Philosophy & the Christian Faith
Philosophy of Religion (CCP)
Reason in the Balance
Reflecting the Divine Image
Science & Its Limit,
The Secular Squeeze
Seven Men Who Rule the World from the Grave
Strange Virtues
Truth Is Stranger Than It Used to Be
Truth Decay
The Unaborted Socrates
The Universe Next Door
Values in Conflict
Walking in the Ways of the Lord
Written on the Heart

Psychology & Counseling

Family Ministry
Hope-Focused Marriage Counseling
Jesus & Personality Theory
Never Beyond Hope
Unholy Madness

Science & Technology

The Battle of Beginnings
Being a Christian in Science
The Creation Hypothesis
Darwin on Trial
Defeating Darwinism by Opening Minds
The Galileo Connection
Genesis in Space & Time
Intelligent Design
Mere Creation
Objections Sustained
Reason in the Balance
Redeeming Creation
Science & Its Limits
The Wedge of Truth

Spiritual Formation

The Act of Bible Reading
Alive to God
At the Cross
Being Human
Christian Spirituality
The Complete Book of Everyday Christianity
Confessions of a Beginning Theologian
Disciplemakers' Handbook
Discipleship Essentials
Discipleship of the Mind
Dynamics of Spiritual Life
Embodied Holiness
The Fabric of Faithfulness
Faith at State
Generating Hope
Hearing God
Invitation to a Journey
Knowing Christianity
Knowing God
Knowing with the Heart
Listening to God in Times of Choice
A Little Handbook on Having a Soul
A Long Obedience in the Same Direction
The Myth of Certainty
Philosophers Who Believe
Prayers Plainly Spoken
Praying Jesus' Way
Praying the Scriptures
Professors Who Believe
Run with the Horses
Seeing God
Six Dangerous Questions to Transform Your View of the World
Spiritual Theology

To Forgive Is Human
Transforming Leadership
Truth & Power
What They Don't Always Teach You at a Christian College

World Religions

Can Evangelicals Learn From World Religions?
Christianity & World Religions
The Counterfeit Gospel of Mormonism
Discovering the Plain Truth
Faiths in Conflict
Gods That Fail
How Wide the Divide?
Neighboring Faiths
The Religious Fringe
Scripture Twisting
The Universe Next Door
Unmasking the New Age

Other

Any non-fiction work by C. S. Lewis, Charles Colson, Francis Schaeffer, Ronald Nash, Gene Veith, Marvin Olasky, J. P. Morleand, or Os Guinness.

Or you can read a book by one of the authors included in *Devotional Classics* by Foster and Smith. These authors are: Dallas Willard, Jonathan Edwards, Francis de Sales, John of the Cross, Bernard of Clairvaux, François Fénelon, Augustine of Hippo, Thomas Merton, Julian of Norwich, Lancelot Andrews, Brother Lawrence, Douglas V. Steere, Henri J. M. Nouwen, George A. Buttrick, Søren Kierkegaard, Evelyn Underhill, Frank Laubach, John Baillie, Martin Luther, Jean-Nicholas Grou, Gregory of Nyssa, Richard Rolle, John Calvin, Blaise Pascal, Benedict of Nursia, Thomas à Kempis, William Law, Teresa of Ávila, Thomas Kelly, Catherine of Genoa, George Fox, Ignatius of Loyola, Jean-Pierre de Caussade, Isaac Penington, John Bunyan, William Temple, John Woolman, Hanna Whithall Smith, Elizabeth O'Connor, John Wesley, Catherine of Siena, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, E. Stanley Jones, Sadu Sundar Singh, Francis of Assisi, Madame Guyon, John Chrysostom, Charles Spurgeon, Watchman Nee