

**Answer Key**  
**Questions in Study Guide to**  
**“Basic Training for Defending the Faith”**

**Answers to Lesson 1**  
**“The Myth of Neutrality—Part 1”**

**1. What is “apologetics”? Define the term and explain the derivation of the word “apologetics.”**

*Answer:* Apologetics is the vindication of the Christian philosophy of life against the various forms of the non-Christian philosophy of life. The word “apologetics” derives from the combination of two Greek words: *apo* (“back, from”) and *logos* (“word”), meaning “to give a word back, to respond” in defense.

**2. What is the central point of Dr. Bahnsen’s first lecture?**

*Answer:* To demonstrate that human thought and conduct are not neutral and that claims to neutrality are either mis-informed or fraudulent. Consequently, he discourages Christian attempts to develop apologetic systems on the basis of a supposed neutrality in that it contradicts the Christian worldview.

**3. How is the very principle of evolutionism (even apart from the scientific/biological statement of evolutionary theory) opposed to the Christian faith?**

**Answer:** Evolution is committed to the notion of relentless change and therefore is opposed in principle to the concept of absolutes, such as required when we consider God’s Word as our absolute authority.

**4. What is “deconstructionism”? Where did this philosophy first arise? How does it conflict with basic principles of the Christian faith?**

**Answer:** Deconstructionism began as a form of literary criticism started in the early 1970s by Jacques Derrida. It states that no communication can have any set meaning or reliable message because of various influences on the person attempting the communication. This eventually moved beyond pure literary criticism to become a philosophy of absolute relativism. This directly conflicts with the biblical revelation in Scripture which claims two important truths in this regard: (1) God communicates with us by revealing the Scriptures to us so that we can understand, believe, and obey him. (2) We are his images who reflect him when we communicate with our fellow man in an intelligent, coherent way.

**5. List some passages of Scripture that assert the certainty and authority of God’s Word.**

**Answer:** “The words of the Lord are pure words; as silver tried in a furnace on the earth, refined seven times” (Ps. 12:6).

Answer “The Scriptures cannot be broken” (John 10:35b).

“All Scripture is inspired by God and *profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work*” (2 Tim. 3:16–17).

**6. How does the unbelieving college professor’s worldview subtly confront your faith, even when the professor is not directly mentioning Christianity per se?**

*Answer:* (1) By selective consideration whereby he decides what questions are important, which options are serious, what evidence should be set forth in the class. (2) By claiming neutral tolerance of all views but being intolerant of “narrow” Christian views on homosexual conduct, abortion, feminism, and so forth. (3) By censorship, wherein he omits reading material arguing the Christian view while promoting books that counter it.

**7. What does Dr. Bahnsen mean when he speaks of “the myth of neutrality”?**

*Answer:* He means that no one can approach the issues of life from a purely neutral perspective. This is because the Bible teaches that man is a sinner who is opposed to God, not simply indifferent to him. Romans 1:18–21 speaks of the sinner’s active suppression of the truth resulting from his darkened heart. Colossians 1:21 speaks of the sinner’s hostility toward God. Paul pictures our outreach by images of warfare in 2 Corinthians 10:4–5.

**8. What statements by Christ discount the possibility of neutrality?**

*Answer:* Christ teaches that “everyone who hears *these words of Mine*, and *acts upon them*, may be compared to a wise man, who built his house upon the rock.” He goes on to warn that “everyone who hears these words of Mine, and does not act upon them, will be like a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand” (Matt. 7:24, 26).

“He who is not with Me is against Me; and he who does not gather with Me scatters” (Matt. 12:30).

**9. Where in Scripture do you first see neutrality regarding God and his Word attempted?**

*Answer:* In Genesis 3 where Satan presents Eve with the option to obey God or to dismiss his command. She was to assume a position of neutrality toward God's word.

**10. Is the attempt at neutrality simply a methodological issue, or is it a moral one as well? Explain.**

*Answer:* It is both. It is a moral issue because the God demands in Scripture that man is to "fear him and keep his commandments" (Eccl. 12:13). The neutrality postulate is an attempt "to be as God" (Gen. 3:5). The Bible teaches that "whatever is not from faith is sin" (Rom. 14:23) for "without faith it is impossible to please him" (Heb. 11:6).

## Answers to Lesson 2

### “The Myth of Neutrality—Part 2”

**1. Why does Dr. Bahnsen say that the unbelieving mind is actually “hostile” to the Christian worldview? What evidence does he provide?**

*Answer:* He is arguing that since this is God’s world, we are his creatures, are under his control, and will be judged by him, there can be no neutrality in word, thought, or deed. All things belong to God and man owes his all to him. To claim neutrality in thinking is to deny God’s universal authority. In that Christianity is true, the world is as God created it—consequently, claims to neutrality are false despite being a wide-spread, modern secular myth.

**2. In Dr. Bahnsen’s lecture on neutrality, he urges you to recognize two important truths about the unbeliever’s claim of neutrality in reasoning. What were those two major points regarding neutrality?**

*Answer:* The first was “the unbeliever is not neutral.” The second was “the Christian *should not* be neutral.”

**3. What statements by Christ discount the possibility of neutrality?**

*Answer:* “No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to one and despise the other” (Matt. 6:24). And: “He who is not with Me is against Me” (Matt. 12:30).

**4. Why do we say that men cannot be neutral toward God? Provide at least three biblical lines of argument supporting your answer.**

*Answer:* (a) God created all things (Gen. 1:1; John 1:3), thereby giving them meaning. He created all things for himself (Rom. 11:36; Col. 1:16d), thereby leaving nothing outside of his concern for his own glory. He owns all things (Ps. 24:1; 1 Cor. 10:26, 28), thereby having an inalienable right in man and all of his property. God governs all things (Isa. 46:10; Col. 1:17), thereby giving purpose to all things under his wise plan. For man to claim neutrality in thought is to deny God's creatorship, goal, ownership, and plan.

(b) We are positively commanded to fear God in order to gain knowledge in that "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge" and "wisdom" (Prov. 1:7; 9:10).

c. God's universal lordship requires submission to him. God is the universal lord over all the universe from its smallest atomic particle to its farthest flung galaxy. Both God and Jesus are spoken of as "the Lord of lords" (1 Tim. 6:15; Rev. 19:16). The authority of the Triune God is absolute and demanding, so that to deny it in deference to "neutrality" is to deny his lordship.

### **5. What do we mean by the "noetic effect" of sin?**

*Answer:* The Greek word *nous* means "mind." The noetic effect of sin is the effect of sin on man's mind and thinking processes. Man is not fallen in one dimension of life, but is sinful in *all* areas of his life and being, including the mind.

**6. Does Scripture teach that even the mind of man and his reasoning processes are affected by sin? Prove your answer by citing Scripture.**

*Answer:* Yes, man's mind is affected by sin, just as all other areas of his human condition. Scripture speaks directly to the issue of man's sinfulness in thought and mind. In Romans 1:18–21 Paul highlights man's resistance to God in "suppressing the truth" so that he

becomes “futile” in his “speculations.” In Ephesians 4:17–18 Paul strongly declares fallen man’s “futility” of mind and the “ignorance” in them.

**7. In that unbelievers have contributed much to human thought, science, and culture, what does Dr. Bahnsen mean when he states that faith in God is a pre-requisite to truly understanding?**

*Answer:* The only rational foundation for human thought and experience is the Creator God speaking in his word. The unbeliever knows this true God deep in his heart, even though he denies God. The unbeliever’s accomplishments are due to his suppressed knowledge of God, rather than his public denial of God which can’t account for rationality, order, and so forth.

**8. Look up 2 Corinthians 10:4–5. With Christian friends, discuss its meaning and significance for apologetics.**

*Answer:* This passages teaches that you are to hear the call to obedience *in your very thoughts*: “We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ” (2 Cor 10:5). You are to challenge “every lofty thing” which is raised up “against the knowledge of God” so that you take “every thought captive” to “the obedience of Christ.” This plainly and forcefully calls you to obey Christ in the entirety of our thought processes—including your method for defending the faith of Christ.

## Answers to Lesson 3

### “Defining Worldviews”

#### 1. Define “worldview.”

*Answer:* A worldview is a network of presuppositions (which are not verified by the procedures of natural science) regarding reality (metaphysics), knowing (epistemology), and conduct (ethics) in terms of which every element of human experience is related and interpreted.

#### 2. Why is it important that we understand the idea of a worldview?

*Answer:* A worldview governs the way we view reality, knowledge, and morality, the most basic issues of life. We need to be able to articulate our own worldview, so that we may more consistently live and promote the Christian life and more ably challenge the unbeliever’s worldview to show his error and the glory of the Christian system.

**3. Do all men have a worldview? Or is this just a Christian concept? Explain your answer.**

*Answer:* By necessity all sane men have a worldview, because they all must live in the world. Worldviews govern the way we view reality, think and reason, and live morally. These are key issues for any life system.

**4. Why is understanding our worldview as a “network of beliefs” important to a biblical approach to apologetics?**

*Answer:* As biblical apologists we want to challenge the unbeliever’s whole system of life, to show him that he has no foundations for the way he lives. We want to show him the



necessity of having Christian foundations in order to make life intelligible. Piece-meal criticisms do not get to the root of the matter and are easily side-stepped.

**5. What is a ‘presupposition’?**

*Answer:* A presupposition is an elementary assumption in one’s reasoning or in the process by which opinions are formed. . . . [It] is not just any assumption in an argument, but a personal commitment that is held at the most basic level of one’s network of beliefs.

Presuppositions form a wide-ranging, foundational perspective (or starting point) in terms of which everything else is interpreted and evaluated. As such, presuppositions have the greatest authority in one’s thinking, being treated as one’s least negotiable beliefs and being granted the highest immunity to revision.

**6. How do your presuppositions fit into your ‘network of beliefs’? That is, what role do they play in your worldview network?**

*Answer:* Presuppositions are the foundations for all your other beliefs. They give meaning to all of your life issues.

**7. Are presuppositions easily changed or dismissed? Why do you say this?**

*Answer:* No, they are not easily dislodged. Given that they are your core commitments and govern all other issues in life, they are more securely established beneath a whole host of secondary assumptions. Without presuppositions your other assumptions cannot stand.

**8. What are some presuppositional issues that we have latent in our thinking and generally do not think about, but which are absolutely essential to rational living?**

*Answer:* The reality of an objective external world; the reliability of memory; the relationship of the immaterial mind and the material body; your continuing personal identity over time; and the reality of cause-and-effect relations.

## Answers to Lesson 4

### “Worldview Features”

#### 1. What are the three leading issues for any worldview to answer?

*Answer:* Questions regarding the nature of reality (metaphysics), how we know (epistemology), and how we must act (ethics).

#### 2. From what do we derive the word “metaphysics”? What is metaphysics?

*Answer:* The Latin word *metaphysica*, which is based on the compound of two Greek words: *meta* (“after, beyond”) and *physika* (“physics, nature”).

#### 3. What are some key metaphysical questions?

*Answer:* What *is it* to exist? What sorts of things exist? What is the nature of man? What is the nature of the Universe? Is it objectively real? Does God exist? What is his nature? What is God’s relation to the Universe? Is there change or development? How do things change? What is the character of the laws or concepts that govern reality? Are they changing? Universal? What are the limits of possibility?

#### 4. Do all people have a metaphysical program? Explain your answer.

*Answer:* Whether the average person is even aware of metaphysics or not, he most definitely has a metaphysical program or outlook at work in his life. This is because he has at least a general understanding of what he believes the world is all about. If he did not, he wouldn’t be able to make sense out of his experience and couldn’t function in the external world.

**5. What is the difference between “neutral ground” and “common ground”?**

*Answer:* “Neutral ground” requires that there be no commitment one way or another on any given issue being debated. “Common ground” speaks only of a “point of contact” that you share with your debater.

**6. In the Christian view, what are the two levels of reality?**

*Answer:* The uncreated, eternal God, and all else (the created, temporal order).

**7. What do we mean when we say that God is “self-contained”? How is that significant for our apologetic?**

*Answer:* He needs nothing outside of himself to prolong his existence. He is absolutely self-sufficient; he alone is self-definitional

**8. From what do we derive the word “epistemology”? What is epistemology?**

*Answer:* The term “epistemology” is based on two Greek words: *episteme* (“knowledge”) and *logos* (“word, discourse”).

**9. What are some key epistemological questions?**

*Answer:* What is the nature of truth and of objectivity? Of belief and of knowledge? What are their relationships? Can we know and yet not believe? What are the standards that justify beliefs? How do we know what we know? What is the proof or evidence that is acceptable? What are the proper procedures for science and discovery? How are they evaluated? What standards do they offer?

**10. Why do we say that all the Universe reveals God?**

*Answer:* Because God created it for his own glory and created man to know him. Furthermore, the world works according to the all-organizing plan of God and necessarily reflects his wisdom and order.

**11. What are the three forms of revelation in the Christian epistemology? Briefly explain each one.**

*Answer:* General Revelation, which is the revelation of God's existence and glory as seen in creation. Special Revelation, which is God's direct revelation to man to instruct in what he should believe and do, which is recorded for us in Scripture. Incarnational Revelation, which is found only in Christ in that he came to earth as God in the flesh.

**12. What are some key ethical questions?**

*Answer:* What is the nature of good and evil? What are the standards for ethical evaluation? The questions of guilt and personal peace. How do we attain or produce moral character?

**13. Discuss Exodus 3:14 regarding its insights into God's being.**

*Answer:* God calls himself "I am Who I am," which is based on the verb "to be" and is found in the imperfect tense in Hebrew. The imperfect tense indicates uncompleted action, an ongoing reality: God continually is. The repetition of the verb ("I am/ I am" in "I am that I am") emphasizes uninterrupted continuance and boundless duration. This name reveals that God determines from within His own being. "I am that I am" signifies there is no cause back of God.

As the Absolute One, he operates with unfettered liberty. He is not moved by outward circumstances or resisted by countervailing forces

**14. What are the two principal Bible passages that clearly assert the Bible is inspired revelation from God? What do they teach us?**

*Answer:* Second Timothy 3:16–17 and 2 Peter 1:20–21. They both teach that the Scriptures are the direct revelation of God and are authoritative.

**Answers to Lesson 5**  
**“Alternative Worldviews”**

**1. What are some key issues you must understand in dealing with Hindus? What aspects of Hinduism comport with several contemporary Western views?**

*Answer:* You must understand monism (which teaches that all is one), maya (which asserts that all experience is illusory), and relativism (which denies absolutes). In several important respects, Hinduism comports well with several leading Western perspectives, and especially the New Age movement: It has no problem with evolution in that the Hindu religion itself involves an ongoing adaptation of other religions and a spiritual evolution upwards. Much of modern psychology affirms the inherent goodness of man, while Hinduism speaks of man’s basic divinity. Relativity of all truth claims, so widespread in our culture, fits comfortably enough with the Hindu view of illusion, god being a part of everything (both good and bad), as well as its practice of absorbing various beliefs (all other religions are *yoga*, “paths”). Its hyper-spirituality (elevating the spiritual to the exclusion of the material) is alluring to many who are disenchanted with the materialism in Western culture

**2. What are some key issues you must understand in dealing with those influence by Behaviorism?**

*Answer:* Materialism (which teaches that all that is real is material), mechanism (which teaches that all human action is the result of environmental stimuli), the denial of free will (resulting from inherent materialistic mechanism).

**3. What is Marxism view of the progress of history? What is “dialectical materialism”?**

*Answer:* It follows the Hegelian view of thesis, antithesis, then synthesis. This means that struggle is the necessary condition for development to a higher and better life. Dialectical materialism is the interpretation of reality that views matter as the sole subject of change and all change as the product of a constant conflict between opposites arising from the internal contradictions inherent in all events, ideas, and movements.

**4. What is the key idea involved in Existentialism?**

*Answer:* Personal freedom leading to self-expression. This requires the priority of living over against knowing, willing over thinking, action over contemplation, love over law, personality over principle, the individual over society. The religious existentialist seeks the “personal encounter” with God over “propositional understanding” of God. The secular existentialist rids God altogether.

**5. Discuss two biblical reasons justifying philosophical reasoning.**

*Answer:* (1) God created man in his image, which includes rational thought, so that man has an innate desire from his creation to know. And (2) God specifically calls man to seek and to learn, so that man has an moral obligation from his creator to discover

**6. Name the five core worldview presuppositions Bahnsen surveys.**

*Answer:* Monism, dualism, atomism, pragmatism, and skepticism,

**7. What is the central principle of Monism?**



*Answer:* All is one. Reality is made of only one ultimate substance or principle. Monism denies the multiplicity of things.

**8. What is the central principle of Dualism?**

*Answer:* Dualists hold there are two ultimate realities: mind and matter.

**9. What is the central principle of Atomism?**

*Answer:* All reality is material, with matter being composed of infinitesimally small particles.

**10. What is the central principle of Pragmatism?**

*Answer:* Pragmatists teach that the meaning of an idea or proposition lies in its observable practical consequences. Pragmatists argue that we must live to solve our problems, even though we do not need to theoretically account for explanations. We must be able to adapt to the environment, solve our problems and get ahead in life. Pragmatism shuns the traditional problems of philosophy: We do not need certainty, but utility.

**11. What is the central principle of Skepticism?**

*Answer:* Skeptics teach that we do not know anything for certain at all. All human knowledge is so deficient that at best it can only be probably true. Because of this, knowledge is deemed to be simply opinion.

**Answers to Lesson 6**  
**“Worldviews in Collision”**

**1. What is the concept of “antithesis” in apologetics?**

*Answer:* “Antithesis” speaks of opposition or a counter point. As Christians we must recognize the fundamental disagreement between biblical thought and all forms of unbelief at the foundational level of our theory of knowing and knowledge. Worldview apologetics is an all-or-nothing-at-all proposition in which denies a basic, general agreement between the non-Christian and the Christian. To give up the antithesis in seeking neutral ground, is to give up that which makes the Christian faith distinctives.

**2. Where do we see the problem of antithesis begin in Scripture? What is the key verse that sets the pattern of antithesis throughout Scripture? In what other contexts do we see it?**

*Answer:* In Eden we Adam rebels against God. This sets up God’s curse upon the world and the race which continues through history.

**3. How does Genesis 2 set up the horrible character of Adam’s Fall in Genesis 3?**

*Answer:* It shows the loving, intimate creation of Adam and Eve by God, and God’s abundant provision of a peaceful environment. Adam and Eve lacked nothing they needed, but they sinned against God.

**4. Where do we see the ultimate antithesis?**

*Answer:* In Hell where men are forever separated from God and his common grace.

**5. Why is it important to understand the Bible in order to bring a *philosophical* challenge against the unbeliever?**

*Answer:* Our philosophical challenge arise from our biblical worldview. We are setting one worldview over against the other. Consequently, we must understand our own worldview in order to present an adequate challenge to the unbeliever. We must promote the Christian faith *particularly*; and our faith is contained in the Bible.

**6. Give some samples of evidence of contradiction within the unbeliever's worldview as it plays out in his life.**

*Answer:* The unbeliever proclaims a materialistic worldview, but attempts to have some form of (non-material) ethics. He promotes sexual liberty, gay rights, and abortion rights as a matter of freedom and in resisting imposing morality, but then he responds in moral indignation at Hitler's holocaust, America's "unfair" wealth, various wars, and so forth.

**7. What is the basic image of sin which the Bible employs to describe its catastrophic nature?**

*Answer:* Sin is presented as a warfare, an active, destructive, hostile rebellion of man against God.

**8. What biblical passages show that unbelievers do know God but that they actively suppresses that knowledge?**

*Answer:* Romans 1:18–20 where Paul states that unbelievers suppress the truth.

## Answers to Lesson 7

### “Overcoming Metaphysical Bias”

**1. What is the modern mind’s pre-disposition toward metaphysics? When did this begin?**

*Answer:* The modern mind tends to discount metaphysics as distracting, outmoded, and unnecessary. This became a special problem during the Enlightenment of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries.

**2. Among those who tolerate metaphysics, which do they deem more basic, metaphysics or epistemology? Why?**

*Answer:* Metaphysics is subordinated to epistemology. This results from the great success of scientific and technological achievement. Science has brought us so much, that the scientific “method” has become the dominant ideal in modern thinking.

**3. State five of the eight responses we provide against the anti-metaphysical bias of today.**

*Answer:* (1) Epistemological method is not neutral because it either presupposes the truth or error of the Christian worldview. (2) Metaphysics is essential to epistemology in that how one reasons depends on the nature of reality. (3) Anti-metaphysical arguments are uncritical in that they make metaphysical assumptions about reality. (4) Metaphysical presuppositions are necessary to human experience in that they provide a starting point for reasoning. (5) Anti-metaphysical arguments are mistaken in not realizing that the principles of the scientific method

themselves are non-observational. (6) Anti-metaphysical arguments are self-contradictory in that they specifically disallow non-observational experience, but this very principle is based on non-observational assumptions, as is the principle of the uniformity of nature (which is absolutely essential to science). (7) The anti-metaphysical bias is anti-Christian in that it precludes the Christian answer at the outset. (8) The anti-metaphysical bias is sinfully motivated, for Paul informs us that men seek to suppress the truth in unrighteousness.

**4. Explain why Dr. Bahnsen claims that epistemology is not neutral. What are the two basic epistemological methodologies available to man?**

*Answer:* The Bible calls man to begin with the fear of God for knowledge and wisdom; the unbelieving mind denies that at the very foundation of its operating principles. In the final analysis, there are only two positions: the Christian and the non-Christian approaches. All non-believing approaches are simply variations on the principle of suppressing the truth in unrighteousness. Every method presupposes either the truth or the falsity of Christian theism.

**5. How does the record of Adam and Eve help us see that epistemology is non-neutral?**

*Answer:* God sovereignly and unambiguously commanded that Adam and Eve *not* eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. But Satan challenged God's direct command and told Eve the decision was hers to make. Eve took it upon herself to weigh the two options before her: "Shall I follow Satan who sees no wrong in this? Or shall I follow God who simply declared it wrong without any justifying reasons?" This is the same method the unbeliever chooses: He

asserts for himself *the right to determine proper method*. And he does so without reference to God.

**6. In the Christian worldview, what are the two levels of reality? Explain why the “two levels of reality” are important.**

*Answer:* The two levels of reality are: the eternal God and created reality. the “natural man” assumes “the ultimacy of the human mind.” His *method* is to operate in the world in a way that reduces all reality to one level, denying the authority of God as absolutely determinative. The unbeliever’s method does not bow to the absolute authority of the Creator but claims all authority to reason on his own terms without reference to God.

**7. Why is metaphysics necessary to epistemology, so that our scientific method itself must involve a basic metaphysic?**

*Answer:* Our theory of knowledge is what it is because our theory of being is what it is. We cannot ask *how* we know without at the same time asking *what* we know. Epistemology cannot be divorced from metaphysics in that metaphysics studies such questions or issues as the nature of existence, the sorts of things that exist, the classes of existent things, limits of possibility, the ultimate scheme of things, reality versus appearance, and the comprehensive conceptual framework used to make sense of the world as a whole. These issues *necessarily* impact epistemology.

**8. In what way is anti-metaphysical hostility considered to be “uncritical” and naive?**

*Answer:* If you do not know something about the universe to begin with, you cannot devise a method for separating truth and error (epistemological concerns). Everyone begins with an *integrated worldview* involving metaphysics *and* epistemology. The contemporary anti-metaphysical bias is naively uncritical in overlooking this

**9. Given the Christian's starting point with God, explain how we can avoid the charge of circular reasoning?**

*Answer:* (1) We are not engaged in special pleading for the Christian worldview. We are simply asking which system makes human experience intelligible? For sake of argument, we will grant the unbeliever his system with whatever foundations he adopts in order to see if it can justify its truth claims. But then he will have to grant us ours (for sake of argument) to see if we can justify our truth. (2) All systems must ultimately involve some circularity in reasoning. For instance, when you argue for the legitimacy of the laws of logic, you must employ the laws of logic. How else can you justify laws of logic? In the Christian worldview, however, the Christian apologetic is *not* engaged in *viciously* circular argument, a circular argument *on the same plane*. We appeal above and beyond the temporal realm. God's self-revelation in nature and in Scripture informs us of the two-level Universe: God is not a fact like other facts in the world. He is the creator and establisher of all else. (3) Circularity in one's philosophical system is just another name for 'consistency' in outlook throughout one's system. One's starting point and final conclusion cohere with each other. (4) The unbeliever has no defensible standard whereby he can judge the Christian position. His argument either ends up in infinite regress (making it impossible to prove), has no justification (rendering it subjective), or engages in an unjustifiable

same-plane circularity (causing it to be fallacious). Without a self-verifying standard, he has no epistemological way out. And only the Christian worldview has such a self-verifying standard.



## Answers to Lesson 8

### “Approaching the Unbeliever”

**1. What specific Bible passage sets up the two-fold structure of the apologetical challenge to the unbeliever?**

*Answer:* Proverbs 26:4–5: “Do not answer a fool according to his folly, Lest you also be like him. Answer a fool as his folly deserves, Lest he be wise in his own eyes.”

**2. What does the Bible mean when it speaks of a “fool”?**

*Answer:* In the Bible a fool is not necessarily one who is a mentally deficient, shallow-minded ignoramus. The fool is one who “trusts in his heart” (Prov. 28:26; cp. Jer. 9:23), who rejects God, the ultimate source of wisdom and truth: “The fool has said in his heart, ‘There is no God’” (Ps. 14:1; 53:1). He is a fool because “the fear of the Lord is the beginning” of “knowledge” (Prov. 1:7) and of “wisdom” (Prov. 9:10).

**3. What are the two particular aspects of the biblical apologetic challenge to unbelief? Briefly explain each of the two steps of apologetics.**

*Answer:* (1) Presenting the truth. That is, presenting the Christian worldview on its own terms. (2) Warning of folly. That is, entering into the non-Christian worldview in order to provide an internal critique of its, showing its internal inconsistency.

**4. In what limited circumstances should you adopt the unbeliever’s worldview?**

*Answer:* Only for providing an internal critique of its systemic errors, not in adopting it as a valid option.

**5. Why should you avoid arguing that Christianity is the “best” position to hold?**

**What should you argue instead?**

*Answer:* Because this implies the unbelieving worldview has some merit. The truth is that God exists and he alone provides the preconditions for the intelligibility of human experience.

**6. In the final analysis, what phrase by Dr. Van Til capsulizes the biblical proof of God, displaying the very essence of our argument?**

*Answer:* “The impossibility of the contrary.” This is an indirect argument for God which demonstrates that without God nothing whatsoever can be known.

**7. What do we mean when we speak of the “preconditions of intelligibility”?**

*Answer:* These are the most basic assumptions that provide for the very possibility of knowledge. These assumptions or presuppositions can only be accounted for in the Christian system in its commitment to the Creator God.

**8. How is our very self-awareness an argument for God’s existence?**

*Answer:* The very fact of self-awareness distinguishes man from rocks. But how can the unbeliever account for human self-awareness as a fundamental factor of life? Where does it come from? How is it that man is self-aware? In the unbeliever’s naturalistic, materialistic conception of the Universe, all must be accounted for in terms of the material interaction of

atoms. Point out that this forces us to view ourselves as simply matter-in-motion. Ask him how matter can be self-aware. What view of the world makes self-awareness intelligible? Ask the unbeliever to explain where inert matter comes from, then how it becomes living matter, which eventually becomes self-aware, which eventually becomes rational, which eventually becomes moral—and all by the evolutionary mechanism of time plus chance.

**9. Explain how the Christian worldview establishes logic while the non-Christian worldview can't.**

*Answer:* The unbeliever's view of origins presents a chance-based worldview which can have no laws, no necessity, no logical principles, but only randomness. According to cosmic evolutionary theory all is ultimately subject to random change and is in a constant state of flux. But our very rationality requires laws so that things may be distinguished, classified, organized, and explained. Rational comprehension and explanation demand principles of order and unity in order to relate truths and events to one another. Consequently, on the basis of the non-believer's worldview rationality itself has no foundation.

**10. How would you respond to someone who claims to use the “scientific method,” which asserts that all knowledge comes by way of observational analysis through sense experience?**

*Answer:* This method holds, then, that knowledge must be limited to observation and sense perception. Once an unbeliever has committed to this procedure he is involved in epistemological self-contradiction: If all knowledge is governed by observation, then how did he come to know *that*? That is, how did he come to know that “all knowledge is governed by

observation”? Did he *observe* that in the lab? Did he measure, weigh, or count it? Did he detect *that* conceptual limitation by exploring nature? And furthermore, does he observe that this principle is a *universal* limitation on knowledge in all places and at all times so that he can confidently trust it?

**11. How would you show the futility of unbelief by the unbeliever’s declaring child abuse or oppressing the poor to be morally wrong?**

*Answer:* On his worldview he cannot declare that it is absolutely wrong on his chance-based, relativistic worldview. Moral evaluations require an absolute standard, which the unbelieving worldview can’t produce from the perspective of his chance Universe. Why shouldn’t some people take advantage of a child? Why shouldn’t the rich oppress the poor?

**12. How can a flower be used to show the incoherence of the non-Christian worldview?**

*Answer:* In the biblical apologetic all facts testify of God, even the existence of a flower. Various problems arise in considering the flower: (1) The unbeliever can’t explain matter. Where did it come from? How does the Big Bang explain the flower? (2) He can’t explain induction. That is, he is unable to explain the flower’s history and development, since his system is materialistic and the process of induction is not. (3) He can’t explain the flower’s conception which requires logic in order to even talk about flowers, in that it requires the universals of “flowerness” and “dirtiness.” (4) He can’t account for value judgments about flowers. He has no account for aesthetic or ethical values. What do we do about the flower? (5) He can’t explain the flower’s adaptation to its environment. Why is it related to anything else in the random world?

Why can things outside of me be made suitable to my purposes? (6) He can't explain the explanation of flower. In a chance Universe of ultimate randomness, he can't account for unity, differentiation, and classes of things in order to explain what he means by "flower." (7) He has no way to explain our consciousness of flowers. We are self conscious, the flower is not. How is this so since I am but matter-in-motion?

## Answers to Lesson 9

### “The Problem of Moral Absolutes”

#### **1. Why is morality an important issue in defending the existence of God?**

*Answer:* Moral concerns are inescapable in human life. You will find that anytime you forgo beating up your neighbor, he will be grateful for your moral restraint. And what would society be if “every man did what was right in his own eyes” (Jdgs. 17:6; 21:25)? We would all fear going out in public—or even staying at home with morally unpredictable family members. Every waking moment of life involves moral challenges as we choose one action as preferable over another.

#### **2. List some extreme moral positions in the modern world that are helpful for showing the absurdity of attempting to establish ethics without reference to God.**

*Answer:* Animal rights which forbid eating animals and even goes so far as to provide the same rights to animals as they do for man; environmentalism which prohibits using the earth for the good of man.

#### **3. State three moral positions for which modern Christians are denounced, showing the antithesis between the Christian and non-Christian worldviews.**

*Answer:* (1) Pro-life defense of the unborn. (2) Defense of capital punishment to protect the innocent. (3) Opposition to the immorality of homosexual conduct.

#### **4. Define what we mean by “ethical relativism.”**

*Answer:* The view that moral standards are relative from culture to culture, from time to time, or even from person to person so that we cannot assert any absolute standard of right and wrong.

**5. What is the contradiction involved in asserting that no one should declare absolute moral values?**

*Answer:* This assertion of relativism is absolutistic.

**6. What is the standard apologetic challenge which we make against the unbeliever: Re-phrase that challenge for use in the debate over moral absolutes.**

*Answer:* The standard challenge is: What worldview can account for this or for that. Regarding morality: What worldview can account for moral values that condemn child abuse, oppressing the poor, and so forth?

7. What is the absolute standard for good in the Christian worldview?

*Answer:* God's holy character as we come to know it by his self-revelation in Scripture.

**8. One school of unbelieving ethics asserts that "good" is what evokes approval. Explain this position, being careful to note the two divisions in this approach.**

*Answer:* That which is good is that which evokes either social approval or personal approval. Social approval is a society-wide conviction whereas personal approval may differ from person to person.

**9. State five historically-held, reprehensible practices that have been held in various societies, which show the absurdity of the view that good is that which evokes social approval.**

*Answer:* Genocide, infanticide, cannibalism, human sacrifice, child molestation, widow immolation, and community suicide.

**10. What is the problem with claiming that ethical values are intuited?**

*Answer:* You cannot argue about good: you just intuit what is good. Therefore, you cannot have a rational discussion about right and wrong, because you have no way to resolve differences of opinion. This reduces morality to subjective preferences that bind no one, not even the subjectivist who may change his view at any moment. In fact, you have no predictable way to say that a person's intuition about good is good itself. You end up having to intuit that your intuition is right, then intuit that your intuition about your intuition is right. On and on through an infinite regress which results from not having an absolute, self-verifying standard.

**11. How would you respond to the claim that good is that which evokes personal approval?**

*Answer:* This reduces ethics to personal preference. It cannot even declare something good, for such merely explains that the "good" is something that so-and-so prefers, rather than pointing to something objectively good.

**12. How would you respond to the claim that good is that which achieves desired ends?**



*Answer:* If good is that which achieves chosen ends, this leads to certain consequences. Utilitarianism teaches that good is that which produces the greatest happiness for the greatest number. By *why* is the greatest number determinative of good? And what happens when the numbers change? Does good change? Hedonists teach that our own individual happiness and well being are the goals of good. But are sado-masochists, cannibals and child molesters to have their happiness fulfilled? Why?

**13. Defend from Scripture the claim that God's law is our revealed standard of absolute good.**

*Answer:* Romans 7:12 and 1 Timothy 1:8 declare that the law of God is "good." The law of God is given the same attributes as God himself: It is good, righteous, just, holy, and perfect.

**Answers to Lesson 10**  
**“The Problem of Uniformity”**

**1. How is the idea of the “universe” bound up with the notion of “uniformity of nature”?**

*Answer:* That we live in a *universe* indicates that we exist in a single, unified, orderly system which is composed of many diversified parts. These parts coordinately function together as a whole, rational, predictable system.

**2. Explain the meaning of the uniformity of nature using the two basic elements involved.**

*Answer:* (1) Uniformity is valid in all places. The character of the material universe is such that it functions according to a discernible regularity. Natural laws that operate in one place of the universe will uniformly operate throughout the universe so that the same physical cause will in a similar circumstance produce the same physical result elsewhere. (2) Uniformity is valid at all times. We may expect the future to be like the past in that natural laws do not change over time. Consequently, even changes in the universe caused by such super-massive events as exploding supernovas, colliding galaxies, and so forth, are predictable, being governed by natural law. These laws hold true at all times, from the past into the future

**3. Why is the uniformity of nature important to human experience and to science?**

*Answer:* Science and human experience are absolutely dependent upon this uniformity because without it we could not infer from past events what we can expect under like

circumstances in the future. Physical science absolutely requires the ability to predict the future action of material entities. Scientific experimentation, theorizing, and prediction would be impossible were nature non-uniform. Scientific investigation is only possible in an orderly, rational coherent, unified system. If reality were haphazard and disorderly we would have no basic scientific laws governing and controlling various phenomena. For instance, medical labs do controlled experiments to create procedures and medications that cure and prevent disease, and so forth.

**4. State the apologetic challenge you should present to the unbeliever regarding nature's uniformity.**

*Answer:* We must ask which worldview may reasonably expect that causal connections function uniformly throughout the universe or that the future will be like the past? We are asking, in other words, which worldview makes human experience intelligible and science possible?

**5. The unbeliever argues that we can argue that scientific method operates on the basis of observation and experience. How does this present a problem for defending his worldview?**

*Answer:* We have no experience of the future, for it has yet to occur. Therefore, on this experience-based scientific method, how can we predict the future will be like the past so that we may expect scientific experiments to be valid?

**6. Respond to the claim that we can know how things will operate in the future because we have seen how they operate in the past.**

*Answer:* But this statement still only tells us about the past, not the approaching future we now must anticipate. Furthermore, you can't expect the future to be like the past apart from a view of the nature of reality that informs you that events are controlled in a uniform way, as by God in the Christian system and not by chance in the unbelieving system.

**7. What problem arises in the unbeliever's worldview when he claims he knows the Universe is uniform?**

*Answer:* How do we know assuredly that the universe is in fact uniform? Has man investigated every single aspect of the universe from each one of its smallest atomic particles to the farthest flung galaxies and all that exists in between, so that he can speak authoritatively? Does man have totally exhaustive knowledge about every particle of matter, every movement in space, and every moment of time? How does man know uniformity governs the whole world and the entire universe?

**8. List some Bible verses that provide a foundation for our knowledge of the uniformity of nature.**

*Answer:* Ephesians 1:11; Colossians 1:16–17; and Hebrews 1:3

**9. How would you show that the Christian system easily accounts for the uniformity of nature?**

*Answer:* Since God created the rational, coherent Universe by his sovereign, willful plan, and since he created man in his image to function in that world, we see clear revelatory evidence for the foundation of that which scientists call "the uniformity of nature."

## Answers to Lesson 11

### “The Problem of Universals”

#### 1. What do we mean when we speak of “universals”?

*Answer:* In philosophy, any truth of a general or abstract nature—whether it be a broad concept, law, principle, or categorical statement. Such general truths are used to understand, organize, and interpret particular truths encountered in concrete experience

#### 2. Is the concept of universals practical to our everyday lives? Explain.

*Answer:* Yes, it is absolutely essential. Without them every fact would stand alone without reference to any other fact. Nothing could be understood in terms of relationships.

#### 3. What three notions are involved in universals that define them?

*Answer:* Philosophers note that a universal involves three notions: (1) By definition, a “universal” must apply to multiple things (otherwise, they would be particulars). (2) They are abstract rather than concrete (therefore, they do not appear in the material world). (3) They are general truths rather than specific.

#### 4. Are laws of logic in the category of universals? Explain.

*Answer:* The laws of logic are universals. They are the most general propositions one can possibly hold. They are used every single time you think or talk about anything whatsoever. They are the abstract, universal, invariant rules that govern human rationality. In fact, they make

rationality possible by allowing for coherent meaning, rational thought, and intelligent communication.

**5. Why should the laws of logic not be called “laws of thought”?**

*Answer:* You should not say that these are “laws of thought,” as if they were matters of subjective human psychology informing us how people think. We know, of course, that people actually breach the laws of logic regularly. The laws of logic are not laws of thought, but *presuppositions* of (coherent) thinking.

**6. State and briefly define each of the three basic laws of logic.**

*Answer:* (1) The Law of Identity states that “A is A.” This means that if any statement is true, it is true; it cannot be both true and not true simultaneously. That is, anything that exists in reality has a particular identity and is not something else. The thing is what it is. (2) The Law of Contradiction states that “A is not not-A.” That is, no statement can be both true and false in the same sense at the same time. (3) The Law of Excluded Middle states that “A is either A or not-A.” That is, every statement must be either true or false exclusively, there is no middle ground. Or to put it differently: if a given statement is not true, then its denial must be true.

**7. What is the basic apologetic question we must ask of the unbeliever regarding universals and the laws of logic?**

*Answer:* “Which worldview makes sense of universals and the laws of logic?” The recurring problem for the unbelieving worldview arises once again: He cannot *account* for universals and the laws of logic.

**8. How is the scientific method problematic to the laws of logic in the unbeliever's worldview?**

*Answer:* The unbelieving empiricist cannot account for the laws of logic which regulate human reasoning. The laws of logic are not physical objects existing as a part of the sense world. They are not the result of observable behavior of material objects or physical actions. Do the laws of logic exist in the natural world so that they can be empirically examined? If we are materialists, then only that which is objective in the realm of sense experience is real. What sense do the laws of logic make for unbelievers? What are the laws of logic? If they are just the firing of nerve endings in the neural synapses, then logic differs from person to person and are therefore not laws at all. The inherent materialism in the modern world cannot account for laws of logic.

**9. How is the unbeliever's ultimate commitment to chance problematic for the laws of logic?**

*Answer:* In a chance universe, all particular facts would be random, have no classifiable identity, bear no pre-determined order or relation, and thus be unintelligible to man's mind. Chance can't account for law. Universals and the laws of logic are inimical to chance and randomness:

**10. How does the unbeliever's worldview involve internal tension and contradiction when it tries to affirm the laws of logic?**

*Answer:* On the assumptions of the natural man logic is a timeless impersonal principle, and facts are controlled by chance. It is by means of universal timeless principles of logic that the

natural man must, on his assumptions, seek to make intelligible assertions about the world of reality or chance. But this cannot be done without falling into self-contradiction. About chance no manner of assertion can be made. In its very idea it is the irrational. And how are rational assertions to be made about the irrational?

**11. What is the problem with claiming the laws of logic are human conventions adopted by men?**

*Answer:* In the first place the laws of logic are not agreed upon by all people. Hindus affirm monism which denies differentiation. Since all is one, obviously there can be no law of contradiction. If the unbeliever states that the laws of logic are agreed upon conventions, then they are not absolute because they are subject to “vote” and therefore to change.

**12. What is the relationship between the laws of logic and God?**

*Answer:* The Christian holds as a basic presupposition that God is the creator of the world and of the human mind, so that all intelligibility is due to him. He is the author of all truth, wisdom, and knowledge. Christians see the laws of logic as expressions of God’s thinking, his own consistent personal nature, not as principles outside of God to which he must measure up. The laws of logic reflect the nature of God, for in him we find perfect coherence.

**13. Cite some verses that affirm each of the three laws of logic.**

*Answer:* (1) The law of identity is affirmed by God when he identifies himself: “I am that I am” (Ex. 3:14). God is himself and not something else. (2) The law of non-contradiction lies beneath the command to “Let your yes, be yes, and your no, no so that you may not fall under



judgment” (James 5:12). (3) The law of excluded middle appears in the notion of antithesis, as when Jesus says: “He who is not with Me is against Me; and he who does not gather with Me scatters.” Obviously, one is either “for” Christ or “against” him. There is no middle ground—according to Christ himself.

## Answers to Lesson 12

### “The Problem of Personal Freedom and Dignity”

**1. What does the phrase “epistemological self-conscious” mean? Why is it significant as an apologetic tool?**

*Answer:* One who is “epistemologically self-conscious” engages life in a way that fully comports with his theory of knowledge. That is, his behavior and reasoning are perfectly consistent with his basic commitments regarding the world and knowledge

**2. Define the concept of “dignity” as involved in the concept of “human dignity.” How is it important for our daily lives? For our social lives?**

*Answer:* Human “dignity” deals with notions of the ethical value, personal respect, and inherent worth of human life. The question of human dignity is of enormous practical significance in both our mundane lives and our theoretical worldviews. It not only impacts our daily attitudes and our interaction with others but serves as the very foundation for human rights and a stable society.

**3. What two illustrations of our dignity does Dr. Bahnsen present? Explain his use of them in apologetics.**

*Answer:* Funerals for deceased persons and law courts for defending rights. Animals have nothing in their activity that expresses any notion of dignity or of standards of right and wrong in society. Funerals and law courts exhibit our notion of human dignity.

**4. Though most Americans accept the notion of human dignity, not all people do.**

**List some samples of widespread disavowal of human dignity.**

*Answer:* The Nazis denied the dignity of Jews in World War 2. Muslim chattel slavery discounts the dignity of black slaves.

**5. State some historical examples of the problem of overstating the dignity of life (without Christian worldview constraints).**

*Answer:* Albert Schweitzer refused to sanitize his hospital because it killed bacterial life. Janists make preparations to insure they not accidentally kill flies.

**6. How does materialism destroy the notion of human dignity?**

*Answer:* In the materialist worldview we are just bundles of genetic information. What dignity inheres in a collection of DNA strands?

**7. What is the ultimate problem the unbelieving worldview has in attempting to affirm human dignity.**

*Answer:* What meaning does dignity have in a chance Universe? We must recall that chance can't account for morality or universals. Chance destroys the very possibility of meaning and significance, taking down with it the notion of dignity.

**8. Outline the Christian case for human dignity.**

*Answer:* (1) Scripture repeatedly establishes the firm basis of human dignity, declaring that man exists as the image of the eternal God. The psalmist declares that God made man "a

little lower than God” (Ps. 8:5). (2) Our value is underscored by the fact that the Son of God took upon himself true humanity in order to redeem us from our sins. (3) Our holy God even provided for us in Scripture a system of morality and of law that establish special protections for man, affirming his dignity. (4) The Scriptures speak of the high value of reputation and a name, even preferring them over gold. “A good name is to be more desired than great riches, favor is better than silver and gold” (Prov. 22:1).