

# **Christian Apologetics**

## **Final Examination**

### *Spring 2021*

*You may use your class notes and an unmarked Bible.  
No textbooks or other resources may be used.*

*There is no time limit; however, once you open this document,  
you must complete the final examination in its entirety without stopping.*

*You may handwrite your responses, scan your responses, and upload a digital  
scan of your responses in PDF. Or, you may type your responses  
and upload your finished responses as a DOC file.*

*You must include an affirmation that no resources were used other  
than your handwritten notes from this class and a Bible.*

#### **1. APOLOGETICS DEFINITION**

*5 points, at least one paragraph*

- (1) Provide the definition of “apologetics” that was provided in class.
- (2) State what you would change about this definition.

#### **2. APOLOGETICS METHODS**

*5 points, at least five paragraphs*

Which of the following three options is *most* compatible with Scripture, in your understanding? Which of the following is *least* compatible with Scripture?

- (1) Classical apologetics,
- (2) Evidential apologetics
- (3) Transcendental apologetics

Summarize each approach; then, make your argument for the *most* and the *least* compatible with Scripture from the Bible and from your course notes.

**3, 4, and 5. SHORT ESSAY PROMPTS**  
*5 points each, at least four paragraphs each*

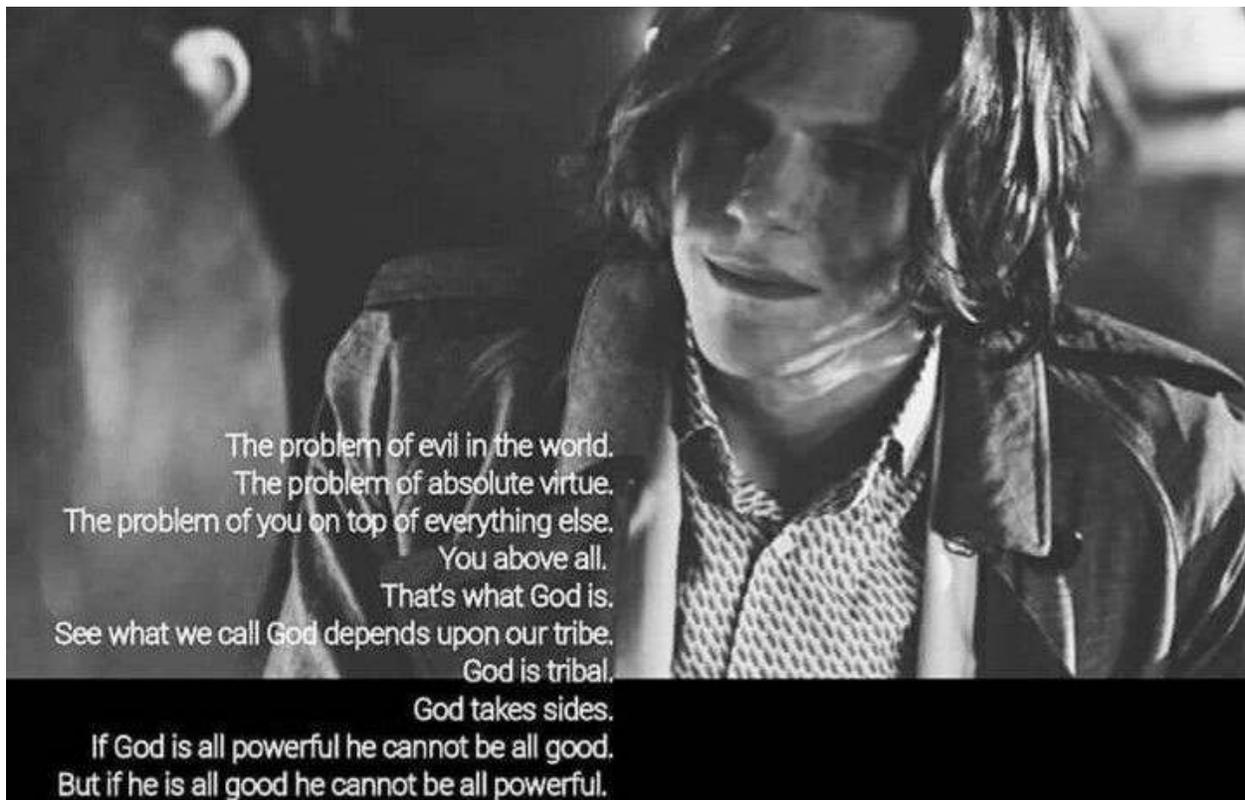
**CHOOSE AND ANSWER THREE  
OF THE FOLLOWING FIVE PROMPTS.**

**PROMPT 1: (LEX) LUTHOR'S THESES /**

According to Lex Luthor in *Batman v. Superman: Dawn of Justice*,

*No man in the sky intervened when I was a boy to deliver me from Daddy's fists and abominations. I figured out way back if God is all-powerful, he cannot be all good. But if he is all good, ... he cannot be all-powerful.*

Drawing from the lectures on the problems of evil, respond to Luthor's statement. Your response must take into account not only the *logical* problems with this statement but also the issues of *existential suffering* implied in Luthor's words. Your response should demonstrate familiarity with Alvin Plantinga's arguments in *God, Freedom, and Evil*.



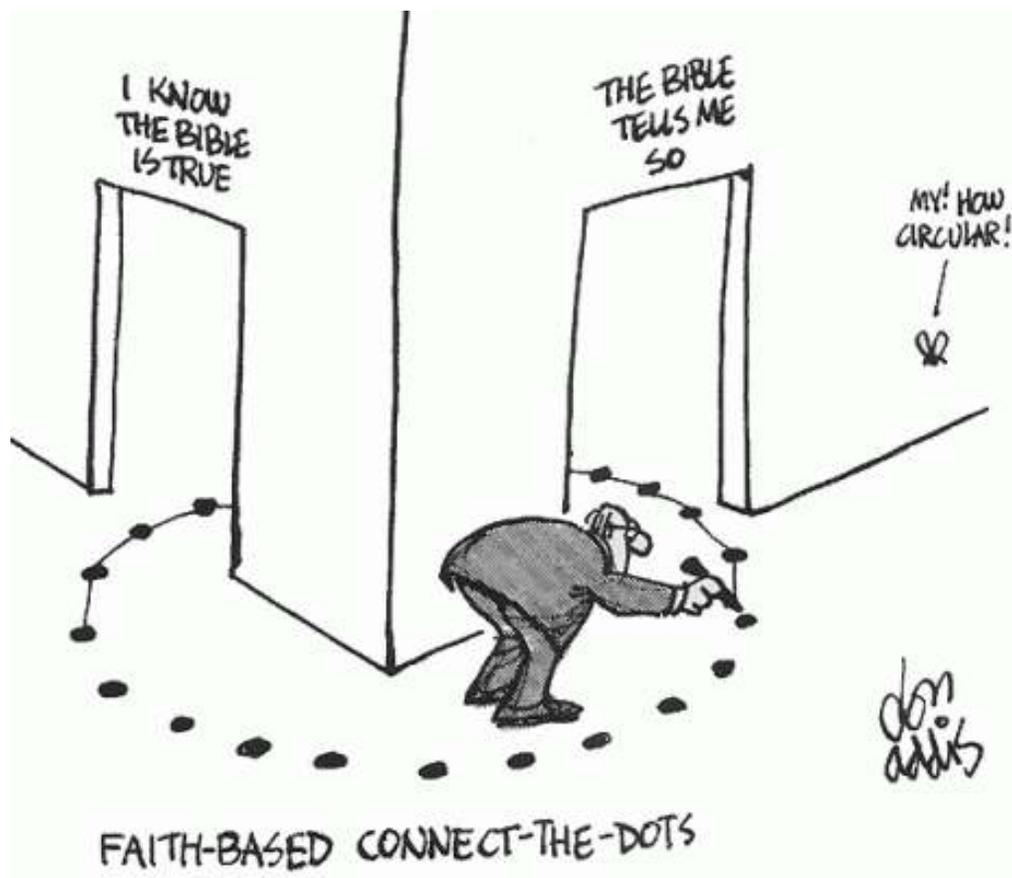
## PROMPT 2: REASONING IN CIRCLES?

Suppose that someone says to you, “You only believe that the Bible is true because the Bible claims that it’s true. That’s circular reasoning!”

Develop a gracious and reasonable response to this accusation.

Class notes about the four approaches to knowing the Bible is true—(1) evidentialist, (2) verificationist, (3) classical Reformed, and (4) Van Tilian Reformed—will be essential as you develop your response. Notes from *Why Should I Trust the Bible?* and “Fern-Seed and Elephants” may also be helpful.

Depending on which apologetics method you perceive to be most compatible with Scripture, your response might focus on external evidences, on the resurrection of Jesus, on the witness of the Holy Spirit, on the self-authentication of Scripture, or on some combination of these factors.



### **PROMPT 3: A TALE OF TWO VANS (AND ONE SAM)**

In the 2004 Van Halen song “Learning to See,” Sammy Hagar sang the following:

*“Trying to follow every footprint,  
I feel so lost along the way,  
reading the Scriptures—  
straight from the Gospel—  
but never understanding what they say.”*

According to Van Tilian presuppositionalism, why is Sammy Hagar “never understanding what” the words of Scripture have to say?

How would an evidentialist or a classical apologist see Hagar’s lack of understanding differently?

Which perspective on an unbeliever’s failure to understand the Scriptures best describes your own perspective?

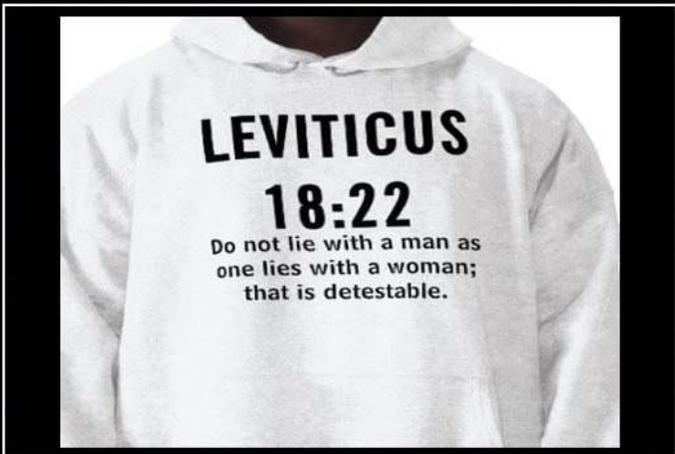
Your class notes on classical apologetics, evidential apologetics, and Van Tilian presuppositionalism, as well as your notes about Cornelius Van Til from the textbook *The History of Apologetics*, must be referenced in your response.



## PROMPT 4: DON'T BE SO SHELLFISH

Drawing from class notes and from your notes from *Why Should I Trust the Bible?*, write a kind, winsome, and clear response to the following meme and sign.

Your response must clarify why Christians are *not* inconsistent to reject homosexual practices and yet simultaneously to ignore such biblical laws as the injunctions against eating shellfish and wearing clothing woven from different types of thread.



**LEVITICUS**  
**18:22**  
Do not lie with a man as  
one lies with a woman;  
that is detestable.

**is that a poly-cotton blend?**

Leviticus 19:19  
"You must obey all my decrees.  
Do not mate two different kinds of animals.  
Do not plant your field with two different kinds of seed.  
Do not wear clothing woven from two different kinds of thread."

**Know Your Bible**



## **PROMPT 5: A MARVEL-OUS ARGUMENT AGAINST ATHEISM**

The director of *The Avengers* and *Avengers: Age of Ultron* is an atheist who spoke these words in a 2013 interview with *Entertainment Weekly*:

*I have no hope. ... My stories do have hope. ... If I wrote what I really think, I would be so sad all the time. We create to fill a gap—not just to avoid the idea of dying, it's to fill some particular gap in ourselves. ... So I write things where people will lay down their lives for each other.*

Drawing from the lectures on transcendental apologetics, develop a negative regressive transcendental argument against naturalism, based on this film director's incapacity to live consistently within the constraints of his own beliefs. Your notes from the chapters about Francis Schaeffer and Charles Taylor in *The History of Apologetics* may also be helpful.

