

UNDERSTANDING THE TIMES SERIES

UNDERSTANDING THE FAITH

A SURVEY OF CHRISTIAN APOLOGETICS

TEACHER MANUAL

UNDERSTANDING THE FAITH STUDENT MANUAL

Published by Summit Ministries

P.O. Box 207

Manitou Springs, CO 80829

Contributors: Amanda Bridger, Jason Graham, Mike Hamel, David Knopp, Jeff Myers, and Stephen Sutherland

Editors: Louise Betelli, Linda Harris, Tisha Martin, and Rachel Newman

Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations are taken from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

LCCN: 2017962857

ISBN-13: 978-0-936163-67-3

ISBN-10: 0-936163-67-4

Copyright © 2018 Summit Ministries®

All Rights Reserved

Unauthorized Duplication Prohibited

Printed in the United States of America

First Printing 2018

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

CONTENTS

	Using UTF pg. iv		Syllabus pg. vi		
1	Introduction pg. 1	2	What the Bible Is and Isn't pg. 25	3	Does the Bible Have Authority? pg. 43
4	What the Bible Says about God pg. 69	5	The Bible: God's Big Story 1 pg. 93	6	The Bible: God's Big Story 2 pg. 119
7	How to Read the Bible pg. 137	8	What the Bible Says about Loving God pg. 161	9	What the Bible Says about Loving Our Neighbors pg. 185
10	Is God Christian? pg. 209	11	Supernatural Good and Evil pg. 227	12	Isn't Christianity Anti-Science pg. 245
13	Isn't Claiming Truth Intolerant? pg. 263	14	Why Is There Evil and Suffering? pg. 287	15	What's the Deal with Hell? pg. 303
16	Is God a Mean Bully? pg. 321	17	If Christianity Is True, Why Do People Walk Away? pg. 339	18	Conclusion pg. 365

Course Overview

The Bible has been the most influential book in the history of the world, printed, in part or in whole, in 2,800 languages worldwide. Christians believe the Bible is God’s Word. Through it, the creator of the universe speaks to humankind in a way he does nowhere else. If the Bible’s claim to reveal God is authoritative, then it extends to every area of life—to everyone in the world, at all times. If the Bible’s revelation about God is accurate, then what it says is authoritative.

The first volume in the Understanding the Times series, *Understanding the Faith* is an apologetics handbook that lays the foundation for a Christian worldview by studying what the Bible reveals about God, humanity, and life in this world. *Understanding the Faith* addresses life’s most important questions like “Why do we exist?” and “What is the meaning of life?” from a biblical perspective.

But is the Bible a trustworthy source? Does it contain errors and discrepancies? What about the critiques and questions of skeptics and atheists? *Understanding the Faith* answers the common challenges people pose in attempting to refute Christianity. It deals with these issues in a way that will instill confidence in God and his word while equipping readers to be courageous, articulate, and compassionate followers of Jesus Christ.

Syllabus: What occurs each day and when assignments are due.

Main Sections

Before beginning this curriculum, it will be helpful to understand its structure and components.

1. **Objectives:** Main learning goals for each chapter.
2. **Chapter Discussion Questions:** A review of the material read in each chapter.
3. **Classroom Activities:** Activities designed to reinforce content from each chapter.
4. **Readings:** Primary source materials, sometimes from non-Christian sources.
5. **Reading Discussion Questions:** A review of the material from the primary source readings.

6. **Reading Quizzes:** Multiple-choice and true/false questions for each primary source reading.
7. **Videos:** Lectures from experts, which dive deeper into key subjects.
8. **Video Outlines:** Notes from each video.
9. **Video Discussion Questions:** A review of the material covered in each video.
10. **Video Quizzes:** Multiple-choice and true/false questions for each video.
11. **Key Points:** Includes key questions, terms, verses, players, and works from each chapter reading.
12. **Writing Assignments:** Essay questions to answer at the end of each chapter.
13. **Tests:** A mixture of questions (matching, multiple choice, true/false, fill-in-the-blank, short answer, and essay) taken from each chapter's content.

College Credit

If you are interested in learning more about college credit for this course, please visit understandingthetimes.com/college-credit for more information.

SYLLABUS

WEEK 1

DAY	5-Day	ASSIGNMENT	PG
1	In Class	ASSIGN UTF Chapter 01 Assignment (p. 23)	1
	In Class	VIEW UTF Chapter 01 Objectives	
	At Home	READ UTF Chapter 01	
2	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 01 Questions	2
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 01 Activities	2
3	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 01 Questions	2
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 01 Activities	2
4	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 01 Questions	2
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 01 Activities	2
5	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 01 Questions	2
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 01 Activities	2

WEEK 2

DAY	5-Day	ASSIGNMENT	PG
6	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 01 Questions	2
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 01 Activities	2
	At Home	READ “Does God Exist?”	8
7	In Class	GIVE “Does God Exist?” Quiz	CD
	In Class	DISCUSS “Does God Exist?” Questions	16
	At Home	WATCH “Why Apologetics?”	18
8	In Class	GIVE “Why Apologetics?” Quiz	CD
	In Class	DISCUSS “Why Apologetics?” Questions	20
9	In Class	STUDY FOR UTF Chapter 01 Test	
10	In Class	COLLECT UTF Chapter 01 Assignment	CD
	In Class	GIVE UTF Chapter 01 Test	CD
	At Home	READ UTF Chapter 02	

WEEK 3

DAY	5-Day	ASSIGNMENT	PG
11	In Class	REVIEW UTF Chapter 01 Test	25
	In Class	REVIEW UTF Chapter 01 Assignment	
	In Class	ASSIGN UTF Chapter 02 Assignment (p. 41)	
	In Class	VIEW UTF Chapter 02 Objectives	
	At Home	READ UTF Chapter 02	
12	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 02 Questions	26
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 02 Activities	26
13	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 02 Questions	26
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 02 Activities	26
14	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 02 Questions	26
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 02 Activities	26
15	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 02 Questions	26
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 02 Activities	26

WEEK 4

DAY	5-Day	ASSIGNMENT	PG
16	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 02 Questions	26
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 02 Activities	26
	At Home	READ “The Bible’s Influence”	32
17	In Class	GIVE “The Bible’s Influence” Quiz	CD
	In Class	DISCUSS “The Bible’s Influence” Questions	33
	At Home	WATCH “The Case for Truth”	35
18	In Class	GIVE “The Case for Truth” Quiz	CD
	In Class	DISCUSS “The Case for Truth” Questions	38
19	In Class	STUDY FOR UTF Chapter 02 Test	
20	In Class	COLLECT UTF Chapter 02 Assignment	CD
	In Class	GIVE UTF Chapter 02 Test	CD
	At Home	READ UTF Chapter 03	

WEEK 5

DAY	5-Day	ASSIGNMENT	PG
21	In Class	REVIEW UTF Chapter 02 Test	
	In Class	REVIEW UTF Chapter 02 Assignment	
	In Class	ASSIGN UTF Chapter 03 Assignment (p. 66)	
	In Class	VIEW UTF Chapter 03 Objectives	43
	At Home	READ UTF Chapter 03	
22	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 03 Questions	44
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 03 Activities	44
23	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 03 Questions	44
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 03 Activities	44
24	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 03 Questions	44
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 03 Activities	44
25	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 03 Questions	44
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 03 Activities	44

WEEK 6

DAY	5-Day	ASSIGNMENT	PG
26	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 03 Questions	44
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 03 Activities	44
	At Home	READ “Misquoting Jesus”	51
27	In Class	GIVE “Misquoting Jesus” Quiz	CD
	In Class	DISCUSS “Misquoting Jesus” Questions	58
	At Home	WATCH “The Case for Reliability of the Gospels”	60
28	In Class	GIVE “The Case for Reliability of the Gospels” Quiz	CD
	In Class	DISCUSS “The Case for ... the Gospels” Questions	63
29	In Class	STUDY FOR UTF Chapter 03 Test	
30	In Class	COLLECT UTF Chapter 03 Assignment	CD
	In Class	GIVE UTF Chapter 03 Test	CD
	At Home	READ UTF Chapter 04	

WEEK 7

DAY	5-Day	ASSIGNMENT	PG
31	In Class	REVIEW UTF Chapter 03 Test	
	In Class	REVIEW UTF Chapter 03 Assignment	
	In Class	ASSIGN UTF Chapter 04 Assignment (p. 91)	
	In Class	VIEW UTF Chapter 04 Objectives	69
	At Home	READ UTF Chapter 04	
32	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 04 Questions	70
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 04 Activities	70
33	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 04 Questions	70
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 04 Activities	70
34	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 04 Questions	70
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 04 Activities	70
35	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 04 Questions	70
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 04 Activities	70

WEEK 8

DAY	5-Day	ASSIGNMENT	PG
36	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 04 Questions	70
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 04 Activities	70
	At Home	READ “What Does Christianity Say ...?”	77
37	In Class	GIVE “What Does Christianity Say ...?” Quiz	CD
	In Class	DISCUSS “What Does Christianity Say ...?” Questions	84
	At Home	WATCH “How to Know the Will of God”	86
38	In Class	GIVE “How to Know the Will of God” Quiz	CD
	In Class	DISCUSS “How to Know the Will of God” Questions	88
39	In Class	STUDY FOR UTF Chapter 04 Test	
40	In Class	COLLECT UTF Chapter 04 Assignment	CD
	In Class	GIVE UTF Chapter 04 Test	CD
	At Home	READ UTF Chapter 05	

WEEK 9

DAY	5-Day	ASSIGNMENT	PG
41	In Class	REVIEW UTF Chapter 04 Test	
	In Class	REVIEW UTF Chapter 04 Assignment	
	In Class	ASSIGN UTF Chapter 05 Assignment (p. 116)	
	In Class	VIEW UTF Chapter 05 Objectives	93
	At Home	READ UTF Chapter 05	
42	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 05 Questions	94
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 05 Activities	94
43	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 05 Questions	94
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 05 Activities	94
44	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 05 Questions	94
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 05 Activities	94
45	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 05 Questions	94
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 05 Activities	94

WEEK 10

DAY	5-Day	ASSIGNMENT	PG
46	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 05 Questions	94
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 05 Activities	94
	At Home	READ “7 Lies Christians Believe about Sex”	100
47	In Class	GIVE “7 Lies Christians Believe about Sex” Quiz	CD
	In Class	DISCUSS “7 Lies Christians Believe ...” Questions	104
	At Home	READ “Creation Accounts and Ancient Near Eastern Religions”	106
48	In Class	GIVE “Creation Accounts and Ancient ...” Quiz	CD
	In Class	DISCUSS “Creation Accounts and Ancient ...” Questions	113
49	In Class	STUDY FOR UTF Chapter 05 Test	
50	In Class	COLLECT UTF Chapter 05 Assignment	CD
	In Class	GIVE UTF Chapter 05 Test	CD
	At Home	READ UTF Chapter 06	

WEEK 11

DAY	5-Day	ASSIGNMENT	PG
51	In Class	REVIEW UTF Chapter 05 Test	
	In Class	REVIEW UTF Chapter 05 Assignment	
	In Class	ASSIGN UTF Chapter 06 Assignment (p. 134)	
	In Class	VIEW UTF Chapter 06 Objectives	119
	At Home	READ UTF Chapter 06	
52	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 06 Questions	120
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 06 Activities	120
53	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 06 Questions	120
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 06 Activities	120
54	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 06 Questions	120
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 06 Activities	120
55	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 06 Questions	120
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 06 Activities	120

WEEK 12

DAY	5-Day	ASSIGNMENT	PG
56	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 06 Questions	120
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 06 Activities	120
	At Home	READ “The Covenants”	126
57	In Class	GIVE “The Covenants” Quiz	CD
	In Class	DISCUSS “The Covenants” Questions	127
	At Home	WATCH “The Difference between ...”	129
58	In Class	GIVE “The Difference between ...” Quiz	CD
	In Class	DISCUSS “The Difference between ...” Questions	131
59	In Class	STUDY FOR UTF Chapter 06 Test	
60	In Class	COLLECT UTF Chapter 06 Assignment	CD
	In Class	GIVE UTF Chapter 06 Test	CD
	At Home	READ UTF Chapter 07	

WEEK 13

DAY	5-Day	ASSIGNMENT	PG
61	In Class	REVIEW UTF Chapter 06 Test	
	In Class	REVIEW UTF Chapter 06 Assignment	
	In Class	ASSIGN UTF Chapter 07 Assignment (p. 158)	
	In Class	VIEW UTF Chapter 07 Objectives	137
	At Home	READ UTF Chapter 07	
62	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 07 Questions	138
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 07 Activities	138
63	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 07 Questions	138
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 07 Activities	138
64	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 07 Questions	138
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 07 Activities	138
65	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 07 Questions	138
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 07 Activities	138

WEEK 14

DAY	5-Day	ASSIGNMENT	PG
66	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 07 Questions	138
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 07 Activities	138
	At Home	READ “Taking the Bible Literally”	144
67	In Class	GIVE “Taking the Bible Literally” Quiz	CD
	In Class	DISCUSS “Taking the Bible Literally” Questions	151
	At Home	WATCH “Relativism”	153
68	In Class	GIVE “Relativism” Quiz	CD
	In Class	DISCUSS “Relativism” Questions	155
69	In Class	STUDY FOR UTF Chapter 07 Test	
70	In Class	COLLECT UTF Chapter 07 Assignment	CD
	In Class	GIVE UTF Chapter 07 Test	CD
	At Home	READ UTF Chapter 08	

WEEK 15

DAY	5-Day	ASSIGNMENT	PG
71	In Class	REVIEW UTF Chapter 07 Test	
	In Class	REVIEW UTF Chapter 07 Assignment	
	In Class	ASSIGN UTF Chapter 08 Assignment (p. 183)	
	In Class	VIEW UTF Chapter 08 Objectives	161
	At Home	READ UTF Chapter 08	
72	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 08 Questions	162
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 08 Activities	162
73	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 08 Questions	162
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 08 Activities	162
74	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 08 Questions	162
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 08 Activities	162
75	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 08 Questions	162
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 08 Activities	162

WEEK 16

DAY	5-Day	ASSIGNMENT	PG
76	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 08 Questions	162
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 08 Activities	162
	At Home	READ “Christ, Our Life”	168
77	In Class	GIVE “Christ, Our Life” Quiz	CD
	In Class	DISCUSS “Christ, Our Life” Questions	176
	At Home	WATCH “What Does It Mean to Be Human?”	178
78	In Class	GIVE “What Does It Mean to Be Human?” Quiz	CD
	In Class	DISCUSS “What Does It Mean to Be ...?” Questions	180
79	In Class	STUDY FOR UTF Chapter 08 Test	
80	In Class	COLLECT UTF Chapter 08 Assignment	CD
	In Class	GIVE UTF Chapter 08 Test	CD
	At Home	READ UTF Chapter 09	

WEEK 17

DAY	5-Day	ASSIGNMENT	PG
81	In Class	REVIEW UTF Chapter 08 Test	
	In Class	REVIEW UTF Chapter 08 Assignment	
	In Class	ASSIGN UTF Chapter 09 Assignment (p. 207)	
	In Class	VIEW UTF Chapter 09 Objectives	185
	At Home	READ UTF Chapter 09	
82	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 09 Questions	186
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 09 Activities	186
83	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 09 Questions	186
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 09 Activities	186
84	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 09 Questions	186
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 09 Activities	186
85	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 09 Questions	186
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 09 Activities	186

WEEK 18

DAY	5-Day	ASSIGNMENT	PG
86	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 09 Questions	186
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 09 Activities	186
	At Home	READ “Why Work?”	193
87	In Class	GIVE “Why Work?” Quiz	CD
	In Class	DISCUSS “Why Work?” Questions	200
	At Home	WATCH “Conversations That Count”	202
88	In Class	GIVE “Conversations That Count” Quiz	CD
	In Class	DISCUSS “Conversations That Count” Questions	204
89	In Class	STUDY FOR UTF Chapter 09 Test	
90	In Class	COLLECT UTF Chapter 09 Assignment	CD
	In Class	GIVE UTF Chapter 09 Test	CD
	At Home	READ UTF Chapter 10	

WEEK 19

DAY	5-Day	ASSIGNMENT	PG
91	In Class	REVIEW UTF Chapter 09 Test	
	In Class	REVIEW UTF Chapter 09 Assignment	
	In Class	ASSIGN UTF Chapter 10 Assignment (p. 224)	
	In Class	VIEW UTF Chapter 10 Objectives	209
	At Home	READ UTF Chapter 10	
92	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 10 Questions	210
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 10 Activities	210
93	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 10 Questions	210
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 10 Activities	210
94	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 10 Questions	210
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 10 Activities	210
95	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 10 Questions	210
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 10 Activities	210

WEEK 20

DAY	5-Day	ASSIGNMENT	PG
96	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 10 Questions	210
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 10 Activities	210
	At Home	WATCH “Is Religion a Poison or Cure?” Debate Clip	216
97	In Class	GIVE “Is Religion a Poison or Cure?” Quiz	CD
	In Class	DISCUSS “Is Religion a Poison or Cure?” Questions	217
	At Home	WATCH “The Case for God’s Existence”	219
98	In Class	GIVE “The Case for God’s Existence” Quiz	CD
	In Class	DISCUSS “The Case for God’s Existence” Questions	221
99	In Class	STUDY FOR UTF Chapter 10 Test	
100	In Class	COLLECT UTF Chapter 10 Assignment	CD
	In Class	GIVE UTF Chapter 10 Test	CD
	At Home	READ UTF Chapter 11	

WEEK 21

DAY	5-Day	ASSIGNMENT	PG
101	In Class	REVIEW UTF Chapter 10 Test	
	In Class	REVIEW UTF Chapter 10 Assignment	
	In Class	ASSIGN UTF Chapter 11 Assignment (p. 242)	
	In Class	VIEW UTF Chapter 11 Objectives	227
	At Home	READ UTF Chapter 11	
102	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 11 Questions	228
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 11 Activities	228
103	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 11 Questions	228
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 11 Activities	228
104	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 11 Questions	228
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 11 Activities	228
105	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 11 Questions	228
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 11 Activities	228

WEEK 22

DAY	5-Day	ASSIGNMENT	PG
106	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 11 Questions	228
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 11 Activities	228
	At Home	WATCH “Miracles” Video Clips	234
107	In Class	GIVE “Miracles” Quiz	CD
	In Class	DISCUSS “Miracles” Questions	235
	At Home	WATCH “Evidence for the Resurrection”	237
108	In Class	GIVE “Evidence for the Resurrection” Quiz	CD
	In Class	DISCUSS “Evidence for the Resurrection” Questions	239
109	In Class	STUDY FOR UTF Chapter 11 Test	
110	In Class	COLLECT UTF Chapter 11 Assignment	CD
	In Class	GIVE UTF Chapter 11 Test	CD
	At Home	READ UTF Chapter 12	

WEEK 23

DAY	5-Day	ASSIGNMENT	PG
111	In Class	REVIEW UTF Chapter 11 Test	
	In Class	REVIEW UTF Chapter 11 Assignment	
	In Class	ASSIGN UTF Chapter 12 Assignment (p. 261)	
	In Class	VIEW UTF Chapter 12 Objectives	245
	At Home	READ UTF Chapter 12	
112	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 12 Questions	246
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 12 Activities	246
113	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 12 Questions	246
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 12 Activities	246
114	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 12 Questions	246
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 12 Activities	246
115	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 12 Questions	246
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 12 Activities	246

WEEK 24

DAY	5-Day	ASSIGNMENT	PG
116	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 12 Questions	246
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 12 Activities	246
	At Home	WATCH “Naturalism” Part 1	252
117	In Class	GIVE “Naturalism” Part 1 Quiz	CD
	In Class	DISCUSS “Naturalism” Part 1 Questions	254
	At Home	WATCH “Naturalism” Part 2	256
118	In Class	GIVE “Naturalism” Part 2 Quiz	CD
	In Class	DISCUSS “Naturalism” Part 2 Questions	258
119	In Class	STUDY FOR UTF Chapter 12 Test	
120	In Class	COLLECT UTF Chapter 12 Assignment	CD
	In Class	GIVE UTF Chapter 12 Test	CD
	At Home	READ UTF Chapter 13	

WEEK 25

DAY	5-Day	ASSIGNMENT	PG
121	In Class	REVIEW UTF Chapter 12 Test	
	In Class	REVIEW UTF Chapter 12 Assignment	
	In Class	ASSIGN UTF Chapter 13 Assignment (p. 284)	
	In Class	VIEW UTF Chapter 13 Objectives	263
	At Home	READ UTF Chapter 13	
122	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 13 Questions	264
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 13 Activities	264
123	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 13 Questions	264
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 13 Activities	264
124	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 13 Questions	264
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 13 Activities	264
125	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 13 Questions	264
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 13 Activities	264

WEEK 26

DAY	5-Day	ASSIGNMENT	PG
126	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 13 Questions	264
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 13 Activities	264
	At Home	READ “Religious Pluralism and Ultimate Reality”	269
127	In Class	GIVE “Religious Pluralism and Ultimate Reality” Quiz	CD
	In Class	DISCUSS “Religious Pluralism and Ultimate Reality”	277
	At Home	WATCH “Truth and Tolerance”	279
128	In Class	GIVE “Truth and Tolerance” Quiz	CD
	In Class	DISCUSS “Truth and Tolerance” Questions	281
129	In Class	STUDY FOR UTF Chapter 13 Test	
130	In Class	COLLECT UTF Chapter 13 Assignment	CD
	In Class	GIVE UTF Chapter 13 Test	CD
	At Home	READ UTF Chapter 14	

WEEK 27

DAY	5-Day	ASSIGNMENT	PG
131	In Class	REVIEW UTF Chapter 13 Test	
	In Class	REVIEW UTF Chapter 13 Assignment	
	In Class	ASSIGN UTF Chapter 14 Assignment (p. 301)	
	In Class	VIEW UTF Chapter 14 Objectives	287
	At Home	READ UTF Chapter 14	
132	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 14 Questions	288
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 14 Activities	288
133	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 14 Questions	288
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 14 Activities	288
134	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 14 Questions	288
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 14 Activities	288
135	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 14 Questions	288
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 14 Activities	288

WEEK 28

DAY	5-Day	ASSIGNMENT	PG
136	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 14 Questions	288
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 14 Activities	288
	At Home	WATCH “God and Evil” Debate	293
137	In Class	GIVE “God and Evil” Debate Quiz	CD
	In Class	DISCUSS “God and Evil” Debate Questions	294
	At Home	WATCH “The Problem of Evil”	296
138	In Class	GIVE “The Problem of Evil” Quiz	CD
	In Class	DISCUSS “The Problem of Evil” Questions	298
139	In Class	STUDY FOR UTF Chapter 14 Test	
140	In Class	COLLECT UTF Chapter 14 Assignment	CD
	In Class	GIVE UTF Chapter 14 Test	CD
	At Home	READ UTF Chapter 15	

WEEK 29

DAY	5-Day	ASSIGNMENT	PG
141	In Class	REVIEW UTF Chapter 14 Test	
	In Class	REVIEW UTF Chapter 14 Assignment	
	In Class	ASSIGN UTF Chapter 15 Assignment (p. 319)	
	In Class	VIEW UTF Chapter 15 Objectives	303
	At Home	READ UTF Chapter 15	
142	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 15 Questions	304
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 15 Activities	304
143	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 15 Questions	304
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 15 Activities	304
144	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 15 Questions	304
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 15 Activities	304
145	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 15 Questions	304
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 15 Activities	304

WEEK 30

DAY	5-Day	ASSIGNMENT	PG
146	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 15 Questions	304
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 15 Activities	304
	At Home	WATCH “C.S. Lewis on Heaven and Hell” Part 1	310
147	In Class	GIVE “C.S. Lewis on Heaven and Hell” Part 1 Quiz	CD
	In Class	DISCUSS “C.S. Lewis on Heaven ...” Part 1 Questions	312
	At Home	WATCH “C.S. Lewis on Heaven and Hell” Part 2	314
148	In Class	GIVE “C.S. Lewis on Heaven and Hell” Part 2 Quiz	CD
	In Class	DISCUSS “C.S. Lewis on Heaven ...” Part 2 Questions	316
149	In Class	STUDY FOR UTF Chapter 15 Test	
150	In Class	COLLECT UTF Chapter 15 Assignment	CD
	In Class	GIVE UTF Chapter 15 Test	CD
	At Home	READ UTF Chapter 16	

WEEK 31

DAY	5-Day	ASSIGNMENT	PG
151	In Class	REVIEW UTF Chapter 15 Test	
	In Class	REVIEW UTF Chapter 15 Assignment	
	In Class	ASSIGN UTF Chapter 16 Assignment (p. 337)	
	In Class	VIEW UTF Chapter 16 Objectives	321
	At Home	READ UTF Chapter 16	
152	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 16 Questions	322
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 16 Activities	322
153	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 16 Questions	322
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 16 Activities	322
154	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 16 Questions	322
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 16 Activities	322
155	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 16 Questions	322
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 16 Activities	322

WEEK 32

DAY	5-Day	ASSIGNMENT	PG
156	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 16 Questions	322
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 16 Activities	322
	At Home	WATCH “The God Delusion” Debate Clip	328
157	In Class	GIVE “The God Delusion” Quiz	CD
	In Class	DISCUSS “The God Delusion” Questions	329
	At Home	WATCH “A Christian Response to Homosexuality”	331
158	In Class	GIVE “A Christian Response to Homosexuality” Quiz	CD
	In Class	DISCUSS “A Christian Response to ...” Questions	334
159	In Class	STUDY FOR UTF Chapter 16 Test	
160	In Class	COLLECT UTF Chapter 16 Assignment	CD
	In Class	GIVE UTF Chapter 16 Test	CD
	At Home	READ UTF Chapter 17	

WEEK 33

DAY	5-Day	ASSIGNMENT	PG
161	In Class	REVIEW UTF Chapter 16 Test	
	In Class	REVIEW UTF Chapter 16 Assignment	
	In Class	ASSIGN UTF Chapter 17 Assignment (p. 363)	
	In Class	VIEW UTF Chapter 17 Objectives	339
	At Home	READ UTF Chapter 17	
162	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 17 Questions	340
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 17 Activities	340
163	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 17 Questions	340
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 17 Activities	340
164	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 17 Questions	340
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 17 Activities	340
165	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 17 Questions	340
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF 17 Activities	340

WEEK 34

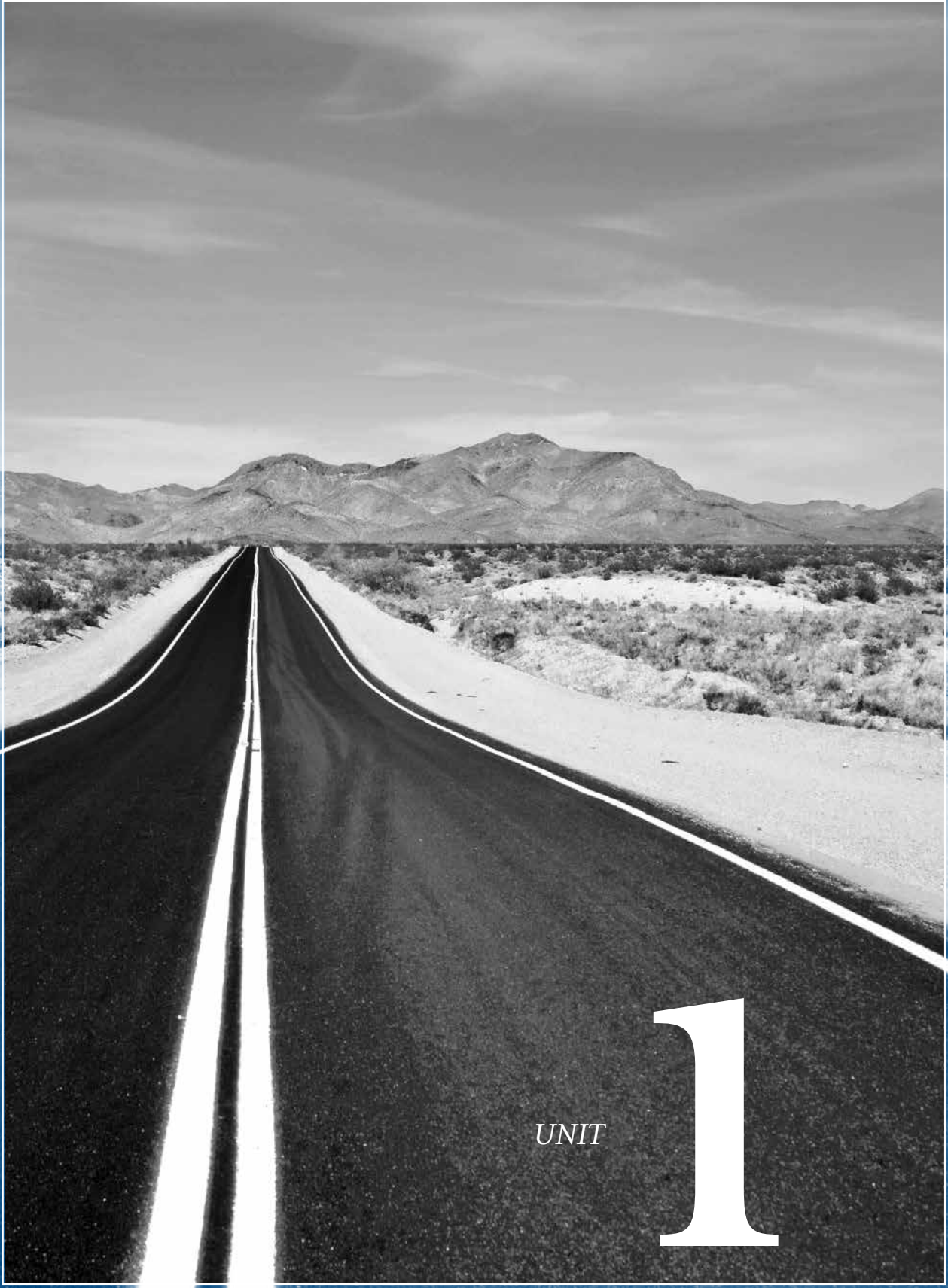
DAY	5-Day	ASSIGNMENT	PG
166	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 17 Questions	340
	In Class	EXPLORE UTF Chapter 17 Activities	340
	At Home	READ “Isn’t Religion Based on Faith?”	346
167	In Class	GIVE “Isn’t Religion Based on Faith?” Quiz	CD
	In Class	DISCUSS “Isn’t Religion Based on Faith?” Questions	355
	At Home	WATCH “Dealing with Doubt”	357
168	In Class	GIVE “Dealing with Doubt” Quiz	CD
	In Class	DISCUSS “Dealing with Doubt” Questions	360
169	In Class	STUDY FOR UTF Chapter 17 Test	
170	In Class	COLLECT UTF Chapter 17 Assignment	CD
	In Class	GIVE UTF Chapter 17 Test	CD
	At Home	READ UTF Chapter 18	

WEEK 35

DAY	5-Day	ASSIGNMENT	PG
171	In Class	REVIEW UTF Chapter 17 Test	
	In Class	REVIEW UTF Chapter 17 Assignment	
	In Class	VIEW UTF Chapter 18 Objectives	365
	At Home	READ UTF Chapter 18	
172	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 18 Questions	366
173	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 18 Questions	366
174	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 18 Questions	366
175	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 18 Questions	366

WEEK 36

DAY	5-Day	ASSIGNMENT	PG
176	In Class	DISCUSS UTF Chapter 18 Questions	366
177	In Class	STUDY FOR UTF Chapter 18 Test	
178	In Class	STUDY FOR UTF Chapter 18 Test	
179	In Class	STUDY FOR UTF Chapter 18 Test	
180	In Class	GIVE UTF Chapter 18 Test	CD



UNIT

1

1

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

1. articulate why they need guidance in life. [1.1–1.2]
2. identify how ideas affect the way they live. [1.3]
3. explain the five key questions that affect their direction in life. [1.4]
4. describe why it is important to understand the times in which they live. [1.5]
5. discuss why the search for knowledge is possible. [1.6]
6. state why the search for knowledge is biblical and important. [1.7]
7. list different types of authority and state the relevance of each to their lives. [1.8]
8. present evidence for why Christians should submit to God's authority. [1.9–1.10]
9. articulate why biblical faith isn't blind or without reason. [1.11]
10. discuss how to deal with doubt. [1.11]
11. explain why this book is important. [1.12–1.14]
12. summarize why they should live out their faith in the location God has placed them. [1.15]

CHAPTER 1 DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why was this book written? [1.2]
2. What is the result of the human search for answers? [1.2]
3. How do ideas influence the direction of our lives? [1.3]
4. Is there a principle we can use to make sense of the vast array of ideas? [1.4]

9. What problem does relativism create for secular humanists? [1.6]
10. Should Christians study worldviews and philosophies that are at odds with Christianity? [1.7]
11. What is the “two-story concept of truth” and why is it dangerous? [1.8]
12. What problems are created by the “fact/value split?” [1.8]

13. What does it mean to have authority? [1.9]

14. What types of authority does God have? [1.9]

15. Is doubt a good reason for not submitting to God's authority? [1.10]

16. What is biblical faith? [1.11]

17. Can a person have faith and doubts at the same time? [1.11]

18. What are the areas where you might be embarrassed if someone were to challenge your faith? [1.13]

19. Are today's Christian young adults prepared to defend their faith in a pluralistic world? [1.14]

20. What is the main battle of our time? [1.15]

21. What reasons can give to show that the Bible is the Word of God?

“DOES GOD EXIST?” READING

Christian philosopher William Lane Craig explains why the idea that God is dead is itself dead in many academic circles. Along with a resurgence of traditional philosophical arguments for God—cosmological, teleological, moral, and ontological—new arguments have been presented and defended by top-tier Christian philosophers.

Craig briefly outlines eight reasons in support of God’s existence:

1. God is the best explanation why anything at all exists.
2. God is the best explanation of the origin of the universe.
3. God is the best explanation of the applicability of mathematics to the physical world.
4. God is the best explanation of the fine-tuning of the universe for intelligent life.
5. God is the best explanation of intentional states of consciousness.
6. God is the best explanation of objective moral values and duties.
7. The very possibility of God’s existence implies that God exists.
8. God can be personally known and experienced.

Together these arguments make a strong case for a personal God as the best explanation for universe in which we find ourselves.

DOES GOD EXIST?

by William Lane Craig

On April 8, 1966, *Time* magazine carried a lead story for which the cover was completely black except for three words emblazoned in bright, red letters against the dark background: “IS GOD DEAD?” The story described the so-called “Death of God” movement then current in American theology. But, to paraphrase Mark Twain, it seemed that the news of God’s demise was “greatly exaggerated.” For at the same time that theologians were writing God’s obituary, a new generation of young philosophers was re-discovering His vitality.

Back in the 1940s and ‘50s it was widely believed among philosophers that any talk about God is meaningless, since it is not verifiable by the five senses. The collapse of this Verificationism was perhaps the most important philosophical event of the twentieth century. Its downfall meant a resurgence of metaphysics, along with other traditional problems of philosophy which Verificationism had suppressed. Accompanying this resurgence came something altogether unanticipated: a renaissance of Christian philosophy.

The turning point probably came in 1967 with the publication of Alvin Plantinga’s *God and Other Minds*, which applied the tools of analytic philosophy to questions in

the philosophy of religion with an unprecedented rigor and creativity. In Plantinga's train has followed a host of Christian philosophers, writing in professional journals and participating in professional conferences and publishing with the finest academic presses. The face of Anglo-American philosophy has been transformed as a result. Atheism, although perhaps still the dominant viewpoint in Western universities, is a philosophy in retreat. In a recent article, University of Western Michigan philosopher Quentin Smith laments what he calls "the desecularization of academia that evolved in philosophy departments since the late 1960s." ("The Metaphilosophy of Naturalism," *Philo*, Vol 4, #2, at philoonline.org). Complaining of naturalists' passivity in the face of the wave of "intelligent and talented theists entering academia today," Smith concludes, "God is not 'dead' in academia; he returned to life in the late 1960s and is now alive and well in his last academic stronghold, philosophy departments."

The renaissance of Christian philosophy has been accompanied by a resurgence of interest in natural theology—that branch of theology which seeks to prove God's existence without appeal to the resources of authoritative divine revelation—for instance, through philosophical argument. All of the traditional philosophical arguments for God's existence, such as the cosmological, teleological, moral, and ontological arguments, not to mention creative, new arguments, find intelligent and articulate defenders on the contemporary philosophical scene.

But what about the so-called "New Atheism" exemplified by Richard Dawkins, Sam Harris, and Christopher Hitchens? Doesn't it herald a reversal of this trend? Not really. As is evident from the authors it interacts with—or rather, *doesn't* interact with—the New Atheism is, in fact, a pop-cultural phenomenon lacking in intellectual muscle and blissfully ignorant of the revolution that has taken place in Anglo-American philosophy. It tends to reflect the scientism of a bygone generation, rather than the contemporary intellectual scene.

Eight Reasons in Support of God's Existence

I believe that God's existence best explains a wide range of the data of human experience. Let me briefly mention eight such cases.

(I) God is the best explanation why anything at all exists.

Suppose you were hiking through the forest and came upon a ball lying on the ground. You would naturally wonder how it came to be there. If your hiking buddy said to you, "Forget about it! It just exists!" you would think he was either joking or just wanted you to keep moving. No one would take seriously the idea that the ball just exists without any explanation. Now notice that merely increasing the size of the ball until it becomes coextensive with the universe does nothing to either provide, or remove the need for, an explanation of its existence.

So what is the explanation of the existence of the universe (by "the universe" I mean all of spacetime reality)? The explanation of the universe can lie only in a transcendent reality beyond it—beyond space and time—the existence of which transcendent reality is metaphysically necessary (otherwise its existence would also need explaining). Now there is only one way I can think of to get a contingent entity like the universe

from a necessarily existing cause, and that is if the cause is an agent who can freely choose to create the contingent reality. It therefore follows that the best explanation of the existence of the contingent universe is a transcendent personal being—which is what everybody means by “God.”

We can summarize this reasoning as follows:

1. Every contingent thing has an explanation of its existence.
2. If the universe has an explanation of its existence, that explanation is a transcendent, personal being.
3. The universe is a contingent thing.
4. Therefore, the universe has an explanation of its existence.
5. Therefore, the explanation of the universe is a transcendent, personal being—which is what everybody means by “God.”

(II) God is the best explanation of the origin of the universe.

We have pretty strong evidence that the universe has not existed eternally into the past, but had a beginning a finite time ago. In 2003, the mathematician Arvind Borde, and physicists Alan Guth and Alexander Vilenkin were able to prove that *any* universe which has, on average, been expanding throughout its history cannot be infinite in the past, but must have a past spacetime boundary (i.e., a beginning). What makes their proof so powerful is that it holds so long as time and causality hold, *regardless* of the physical description of the very early universe. Because we don't yet have a quantum theory of gravity, we can't yet provide a physical description of the first split-second of the universe; but the Borde-Guth-Vilenkin theorem is *independent* of one's theory of gravitation. For instance, their theorem implies that the quantum vacuum state which may have characterized the early universe cannot have existed eternally into the past, but must itself have had a beginning. Even if our universe is just a tiny part of a so-called “multiverse,” composed of many universes, their theorem requires that the multiverse *itself* must have had a beginning.

Of course, highly speculative physical scenarios, such as loop quantum gravity models, string models, even closed timelike curves, have been proposed to try to avoid this absolute beginning. These models are fraught with problems, but the bottom line is that none of these theories, *even if true*, succeeds in restoring an eternal past for the universe. Last year, at a conference in Cambridge celebrating the seventieth birthday of Stephen Hawking, Vilenkin delivered a paper entitled “Did the Universe Have a Beginning?” which surveyed current cosmology with respect to that question. He argued that “none of these scenarios can actually be past-eternal.” Specifically, Vilenkin closed the door on three models attempting to avert the implication of his theorem: eternal inflation, a cyclic universe, and an “emergent” universe which exists for eternity as a static seed before expanding. Vilenkin concluded, “*All* the evidence we have says that the universe had a beginning.”

But then the inevitable question arises: *Why* did the universe come into being? What brought the universe into existence? There must have been a transcendent cause which brought the universe into being—a cause outside the universe itself.

We can summarize this argument thus far as follows:

1. The universe began to exist.
2. If the universe began to exist, then the universe has a transcendent cause.
3. Therefore, the universe has a transcendent cause.

By the very nature of the case, that cause of the physical universe must be an immaterial (i.e., non-physical) being. Now there are only two types of things that could possibly fit that description: either an abstract object like a number, or an unembodied mind/consciousness. But abstract objects don't stand in causal relations to physical things. The number 7, for example, has no effect on anything. Therefore, the cause of the universe is an unembodied mind. Thus again we are brought, not merely to a transcendent cause of the universe, but to its Personal Creator.

(III) God is the best explanation of the applicability of mathematics to the physical world.

Philosophers and scientists have puzzled over what physicist Eugene Wigner called "the unreasonable effectiveness of mathematics." How is it that a mathematical theorist like Peter Higgs can sit down at his desk and, by pouring over mathematical equations, predict the existence of a fundamental particle which, thirty years later, after investing millions of dollars and thousands of man-hours, experimentalists are finally able to detect? Mathematics is the language of nature. But how is this to be explained? If mathematical objects like numbers and mathematical theorems are abstract entities causally isolated from the physical universe, then the applicability of mathematics is, in the words of philosopher of mathematics Mary Leng, "a happy coincidence." On the other hand, if mathematical objects are just useful fictions, how is it that nature is written in the language of these fictions? The naturalist has *no* explanation for the uncanny applicability of mathematics to the physical world. By contrast, the theist has a ready explanation: When God created the physical universe He designed it in terms of the mathematical structure which He had in mind.

We can summarize this argument as follows:

1. If God did not exist, the applicability of mathematics would be just a happy coincidence.
2. The applicability of mathematics is not just a happy coincidence.
3. Therefore, God exists.

(IV) God is the best explanation of the fine-tuning of the universe for intelligent life.

In recent decades scientists have been *stunned* by the discovery that the initial conditions of the Big Bang were fine-tuned for the existence of intelligent life with a precision and delicacy that literally defy human comprehension. This fine-tuning is of two sorts. First, when the laws of nature are expressed as equations, you find appearing in them certain constants, such as the gravitational constant. The values of these constants are independent of the laws of nature. Second, in addition to these constants, there are certain arbitrary quantities which define the initial conditions on

which the laws of nature operate—for example, the amount of entropy (disorder) in the universe. Now these constants and quantities fall into an extraordinarily narrow range of life-permitting values. Were these constants or quantities to be altered by less than a hair's breadth, the life-permitting balance of nature would be destroyed, and life would not exist.

There are three live explanatory options for this extraordinary fine-tuning: physical necessity, chance, or design.

Physical necessity is not, however, a plausible explanation, because the finely-tuned constants and quantities are independent of the laws of nature. Therefore, they are *not* physically necessary.

So could this fine-tuning be due to chance? The problem with this explanation is that the odds of all the constants and quantities' randomly falling into the incomprehensibly narrow life-permitting range are just so infinitesimal that they cannot be reasonably accepted. Therefore, the proponents of the chance explanation have been forced to postulate the existence of a 'World Ensemble' of other universes, preferably infinite in number and randomly ordered, so that life-permitting universes like ours would appear by chance *somewhere* in the Ensemble. Not only is this hypothesis, to borrow Richard Dawkins' phrase, "an unparsimonious extravagance," it faces an insuperable objection. By far, the most probable observable universes in a World Ensemble would be worlds in which a *single* brain fluctuated into existence out of the vacuum and observed its otherwise empty world. So, if our world were just a random member of the World Ensemble, by all probability we ought to be having observations like that. Since we don't, that *strongly* disconfirms the World Ensemble hypothesis. So chance is also not a good explanation. Thus,

1. The fine-tuning of the universe is due to either physical necessity, chance, or design.
2. The fine-tuning of the universe is not due to physical necessity or chance.
3. Therefore, the fine-tuning of the universe is due to design.
4. Thus, the fine-tuning of the universe constitutes evidence for a cosmic Designer.

(V) God is the best explanation of intentional states of consciousness.

Philosophers are puzzled by states of *intentionality*. Intentionality is the property of being about something or of something. It signifies the *object-directedness* of our thoughts. For example, I can think about my summer vacation, or I can think of my wife. No physical object has intentionality in this sense. A chair or a stone or a glob of tissue like the brain is not about or of something else. Only mental states or states of consciousness are about other things. In *The Atheist's Guide to Reality: Enjoying Life without Illusions* (2011), the materialist Alex Rosenberg recognizes this fact, and concludes that for atheists, there really are no intentional states. Rosenberg boldly claims that we never *really* think about anything. But this seems incredible. Obviously, I am thinking about Rosenberg's argument—and so are you! This seems to me to be a *reductio ad absurdum* of his atheism. By contrast, for theists, because

God is a mind, it's hardly surprising that there should be other, finite minds, with intentional states. Thus intentional states fit comfortably into a theistic worldview.

So we may argue:

1. If God did not exist, intentional states of consciousness would not exist.
2. But intentional states of consciousness do exist.
3. Therefore, God exists.

(VI) God is the best explanation of objective moral values and duties.

In our experience we apprehend moral values and duties which impose themselves as objectively binding and true. For example, we recognize that it's wrong to walk into an elementary school with an automatic weapon and shoot little boys and girls and their teachers. On a naturalistic view, however, there is nothing *really* wrong with this: moral values are just the *subjective* by-products of biological evolution and social conditioning, and have no objective validity.

Alex Rosenberg is brutally honest about the implications of his atheism here too. He declares, "there is no such thing as ... morally right or wrong." (*The Atheist's Guide to Reality*, p. 145); "Individual human life is meaningless ... and without ultimate moral value." (p. 17); "We need to face the fact that nihilism is true." (p. 95). By contrast, the theist grounds objective moral values in God, and our moral duties in His commands. The theist thus has the explanatory resources to ground objective moral values and duties which the atheist lacks.

Hence we may argue:

1. Objective moral values and duties exist.
2. But if God did not exist, objective moral values and duties would not exist.
3. Therefore, God exists.

(VII) The very possibility of God's existence implies that God exists.

In order to understand this argument, you need to understand what philosophers mean by "possible worlds." A possible world is just a way the world might have been. It is a description of a possible reality. So a possible world is not a planet or a universe or any kind of concrete object, it is a world-description. The actual world is the description that is true. Other possible worlds are descriptions that are not in fact true but which might have been true. To say that something exists in some possible world is to say that there is some consistent description of reality which includes that entity. To say that something exists in *every* possible world means that no matter which description is true, that entity will be included in the description. For example, unicorns do not in fact exist, but there are some possible worlds in which unicorns exist. On the other hand, many mathematicians think that numbers exist in every possible world.

Now with that in mind, consider the *ontological argument*, which was discovered in the year 1011 by the monk Anselm of Canterbury. God, Anselm observes, is by definition the greatest being conceivable. If you could conceive of anything greater

than God, then *that* would be God. Thus, God is the greatest conceivable being—a maximally great being. So what would such a being be like? He would be all-powerful, all-knowing, and all-good, and He would exist in every logically possible world. A being which lacked any of those properties would not be maximally great: we could conceive of something greater—a being which did have all these properties.

But this implies that if God's existence is even *possible*, then God must exist. For if a maximally great being exists in any possible world, He exists in all of them. That's part of what it means to be maximally great—to be all-powerful, all-knowing, and all-good in every logically possible world. So if God's existence is even possible, then He exists in every logically possible world—and therefore in the actual world.

We can summarize this argument as follows:

1. It is possible that a maximally great being (God) exists.
2. If it is possible that a maximally great being exists, then a maximally great being exists in some possible world.
3. If a maximally great being exists in some possible world, then it exists in every possible world.
4. If a maximally great being exists in every possible world, then it exists in the actual world.
5. Therefore, a maximally great being exists in the actual world.
6. Therefore, a maximally great being exists.
7. Therefore, God exists.

It might surprise you to learn that steps 2–7 of this argument are relatively uncontroversial. Most philosophers would agree that if God's existence is even possible, then He must exist.

So the question is, is God's existence possible? Well, what do you think? The atheist has to maintain that it's *impossible* that God exists. That is, he has to maintain that the concept of God is *logically incoherent*, like the concept of a married bachelor or a round square. The problem is that the concept of God just doesn't appear to be incoherent in that way. The idea of a being who is all-powerful, all-knowing, and all-good in every possible world seems perfectly coherent. Moreover, as we've seen, there are other arguments for God's existence which at least suggest that it's possible that God exists. So I'll just leave it with you. Do you think, as I do, that it's at least possible that God exists? If so, then it follows logically that He does exist.

(VIII) God can be personally known and experienced.

This isn't really an *argument* for God's existence; rather it's the claim that you can know God exists wholly *apart* from arguments, by personally experiencing him. Philosophers call beliefs grasped in this way “properly basic beliefs.” They aren't based on some other beliefs; rather they're part of the foundation of a person's system of beliefs. Other properly basic beliefs would be the belief in the reality of the past or the existence of the external world. When you think about it, neither of these beliefs can be proved by argument. How could you prove that the world was not created five minutes ago with built-in appearances of age like food in our stomachs from the breakfasts we never really ate and memory traces in our brains of events

we never really experienced? How could you prove that you are not a brain in a vat of chemicals being stimulated with electrodes by some mad scientist to believe that you are reading this article? We don't base such beliefs on argument; rather they're part of the foundations of our system of beliefs.

But although these sorts of beliefs are basic for us, that doesn't mean that they're arbitrary. Rather they're grounded in the sense that they're formed in the context of certain experiences. In the experiential context of seeing and feeling and hearing things, I naturally form the belief that there are certain physical objects which I am sensing. Thus, my basic beliefs are not arbitrary, but appropriately grounded in experience. There may be no way to prove such beliefs, and yet it's perfectly rational to hold them. Such beliefs are thus not merely basic, but *properly* basic. In the same way, belief in God is for those who seek Him a properly basic belief grounded in their experience of God.

Now if this is so, then there's a danger that philosophical arguments for God could actually distract your attention from God Himself. The Bible promises, "Draw near to God and he will draw near to you" (James 4:8). We mustn't so concentrate on the external arguments that we fail to hear the inner voice of God speaking to our hearts. For those who listen, God becomes a personal reality in their lives.

Summary

In summary, we've seen eight respects in which God provides a better account of the world than naturalism: God is the best explanation of

- (I) Why anything at all exists.
- (II) The origin of the universe.
- (III) The applicability of mathematics to the physical world.
- (IV) The fine-tuning of the universe for intelligent life.
- (V) Intentional states of consciousness.
- (VI) Objective moral values and duties.

Moreover

- (VII) The very possibility of God's existence implies that God exists.
- (VIII) God can be personally experienced and known.

This essay originally appeared on the website https://philosophynow.org/issues/99/Does_God_Exist. It is reproduced here with the permission of the publisher and author.

“DOES GOD EXIST?” DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What factors led to a resurgence of Christian philosophy in the twentieth century?

2. How does the fine-tuning of the universe provide evidence for a cosmic Designer?

3. Why is God the best explanation of objective moral values and duties?

4. What is the ontological argument and how does it explain God's existence?

5. How do we know that God can be personally known and experienced?



“WHY APOLOGETICS?” VIDEO

Mary Jo Sharp opens with her own story of conversion from atheism to Christianity. She talks about her early struggles with doubt and her efforts to believe in the truth of the Bible. Her search for answers led her into the field of apologetics.

Apologetics is “a defense” for the Christian faith. Apologetics involves knowing what you believe, why you believe it, and how to defend it. Sharp gives three reasons for studying apologetics: (1) to answer doubts, (2) to build confidence, and (3) to change lives. She goes on to explain several ways to do these vital tasks effectively.



To access this video, go to www.summitu.com/utf and enter the passcode found in the back of your manual.



“WHY APOLOGETICS?” VIDEO OUTLINE

Former atheist Mary Jo Sharp rejected Christianity because of many factors:

- Upbringing
- Entertainment and news media
- Shallow and hypocritical Christians
- Distrust of the church

Being exposed to a vibrant Christian and the Bible led to her conversion and ultimately an interest in apologetics. **Apologetics**: giving a “defense” (1 Peter 3:15). Apologetics involves defense and offense:

- Defense—answering _____ to the faith
- Offense—presenting _____ for belief

Three Reasons for Apologetics

1. Answer Doubts

Doubts are prevalent because of

- life experiences;
- brushes with great _____;
- exposure to bad arguments without exposure to good arguments;
- limitation of human knowledge; and
- lack of living in God’s presence.

Seeking answers to doubts can root out false beliefs and allow us to trust God. Sometimes we won’t find answers to doubts; we just have to live with them.

2. Build Confidence

These things tear down confidence in God:

- Popular atheists who insist Christianity isn’t intellectually credible
- Media and education that present a secularized view of the world
- Christians who lack _____, who don’t know how to integrate faith and life, and who reject the need to engage the culture

3. Change Lives

Apologetics can change lives. It transforms us and the people around us.

Personal transformation is proof of God. It’s not that people don’t have answers to their questions, it’s that they don’t have good models.

We can’t change the _____ unless we are changed first.

4. Why are doubts so prevalent?

5. What's tearing down confidence in Christianity in our culture?

Chapter 1 Key Points

Key Questions:

1. Why are ideas important?
2. How do ideas affect us?
3. How do faith and ideas relate?

Key Terms:

1. Epistemology
2. Faith
3. Hard Authority
4. Relativism
5. Soft Authority*

Key Verses:

1. 1 Chronicles 12:32
2. Esther 4:14
3. Romans 1:18–21
4. Romans 12:2
5. 2 Corinthians 10:5
6. Ephesians 4:17–24
7. Colossians 2:8

**Short answer or essay question on the exam*

CHAPTER 1 ASSIGNMENT

Answer the following questions with at least one paragraph.

1. Explain the concept of a mental map and how it can help us to understand and explain the world. Who has this kind of “ideas map,” what kinds of questions should it help us answer, and why do our answers matter?

2. What are some reasons Christians give to avoid thinking about “worldly” kinds of knowledge and philosophy, and how might a Christian answer these objections biblically?

3. What is the metaphor of the “two-story concept of truth,” and what are some consequences of thinking that way?

4. How might a Christian respond to the claim that Christianity is based on faith, and that faith is the opposite of knowledge or facts?

Other potential questions:

- What kinds of authority have most influenced your own understanding of Christianity, whether for good or bad?
- What are some doubts that you have heard about from others or experienced yourself? What caused these doubts?



UNIT

2

2

WHAT THE BIBLE IS AND ISN'T

CHAPTER 2 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

1. describe what the Bible is and is not. [2.1]
2. identify the impact the Bible has had throughout history. [2.2]
3. list the benefits of studying the Bible. [2.3]
4. explain why the Bible is more like a compass than an instruction book. [2.4]
5. describe what it means to call the Bible God's "revelation." [2.5]
6. identify the two ways God has revealed his nature and character. [2.6]
7. explain what it means to say the Bible is "God's Word." [2.7]
8. compare how knowledge and the Bible relate to one another. [2.8]
9. assess on what basis the Bible claims to be true. [2.9]
10. explain why truth matters. [2.10]

CHAPTER 2 DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How do you compare to the rest of the country on some basic Bible knowledge? [2.1]
2. Which of these phrases best describes the Bible: a rule book, an instruction manual, or a story? [2.1]
3. Has the Bible played a key role in the shaping of America or is that just the Christian version of history? [2.2]
4. What are some important reasons to study the Bible? [2.2]

5. **Can you match the following worldviews with their sacred texts? [2.3]**

6. **In what ways is the Bible different from these other holy books?**

7. **What benefits will be gained from a careful study of the Bible? [2.3]**

8. **How is the Bible more like a compass than an instruction manual? [2.4]**

9. Why is the Bible a better compass than other holy books? [2.4]

10. What are the only two options when it comes to the origins of religion? [2.5]

11. What does it mean to say that God is personal? [2.5]

12. What are the two ways in which God reveals his character? [2.6]

13. What do we mean when we say the Bible is the Word of God? [2.7]

14. Can we trust the accuracy of the Bible? [2.7]

15. What does it mean to say the Bible is “inspired” by God? [2.7]

16. What does it mean to say the Bible is “inerrant”? [2.7]

17. What is the basis for true knowledge? [2.8]

18. Which provides a better basis for true knowledge, “naturalism” or “Christian theism”? [2.8]

19. Is 100 percent certainty a necessary condition for knowledge? [2.8]

20. Can we know something with certainty if it hasn't been scientifically proven? [2.8]

21. What is the “correspondence theory of truth”? [2.9]

22. What is “relativism” and how is it self-refuting? [2.10]

23. How is the Bible different from any other book? [2.11]

“THE BIBLE’S INFLUENCE” READINGS

The following articles on the Bible’s influence are from a special collection compiled by *The Washington Times*. They give a brief overview of the impact the Bible has had on civilization in general and Western culture in particular, as well as its influence on literature and American history. This material wasn’t compiled by Christian apologists but by journalists reporting on the cultural phenomenon of the bestselling book of all time.

To access these readings, go to www.summitu.com/utf
and enter the passcode found in the back of your manual.

4. What role did the Bible play in American history?

5. How has the Bible shaped America education?



“THE CASE FOR TRUTH” VIDEO

J. Warner Wallace gives three reasons why so many Christians lose their faith in college: (1) poorly prepared students, (2) aggressive, antagonistic campuses, and (3) innately fallen humans as students. He also exposes the Three Big Lies told at universities today.

Wallace focuses on the understanding of truth, of which he gives four popular views. He uses Francis Schaffer’s illustration of truth as a house, with objective truth residing on the first floor and subjective opinion residing on the second floor. He defines and explains the difference between objective and subjective truth and underscores what makes truth true.



To access this video, go to www.summitu.com/utf and enter the passcode found in the back of your manual.



“THE CASE FOR TRUTH” VIDEO OUTLINE

J. Warner Wallace gives three reasons why so many Christians lose their faith while in college, explains the difference between objective and subjective truth, and gives four popular views of the understanding of truth.

Why Do Christian College Students Defect?

Christians who attend college leave the faith in large numbers. Between 55 and 80 percent of Christian freshmen aren't practicing Christians as seniors. The primary reasons are as follows:

1. Poorly _____ as students
2. Aggressive, antagonistic campuses
3. Inherent fallen human nature

College campuses aren't neutral when it comes to the understanding of truth. Most Christian students aren't prepared to go into hostile territory. And all of us have a sinful bent to follow our own fallen desires.

The Difference Between Objective and Subjective Truth

- Objective truth resides in the _____—FACT.
- Subjective truth resides in the _____—OPINION.

If your opinion *can't* change something, that something is objective truth. If your opinion *can* change something, that something is subjective truth.

Objective truth claims can be proven true or false because there's an objective reality against which to judge them. Subjective truth claims can't be proven true or false because they're personal opinions.

The Three Big Lies Told on College Campuses

1. There's no objective truth; everything is relative.
2. Truth cannot be _____.
3. All views have equal merit and none should be considered better than another.

Four Views of Truth

1. _____: Truth is whatever works.
2. **Empiricism**: Truth is whatever you can sense.
3. _____: Truth is what you feel.
4. **Correspondence theory of truth**: Truth is a relationship between what you think is true and what really is.

Three Ds of Tolerance

Tolerance is “a fair, objective, and permissive attitude toward those whose opinions, practices, race, religion, nationality, etc., differ from one’s own.”

Tolerance requires three Ds:

1. Disagreement
2. Differences
3. Don't be a jerk

4. What are the Three Big Lies told on college campuses?

5. Why is the popular view of tolerance itself intolerant? What's a better definition of tolerance?

Chapter 2 Key Points

Key Questions:

1. Why are ideas important?
2. How do ideas affect us?
3. How do faith and ideas relate?

Key Terms:

1. Correspondence Theory of Truth
2. Dead Sea Scrolls
3. General Revelation
4. Inerrancy
5. Knowledge
6. Naturalism
7. Objective Truth
8. Relativism
9. Revelation*
10. Scientism
11. Self-Refuting Claim
12. Special Revelation*
13. Subjective Truth

Key Verses:

1. Psalm 19:1–4
2. Psalm 119
3. Luke 1:1–4
4. Romans 1:19–20
5. Romans 2:14–16
6. 2 Timothy 3:16
7. Hebrews 1:1–2

Key Works:

1. “Naturalism Defeated”
by Alvin Plantinga

**Short answer or essay question on the exam*

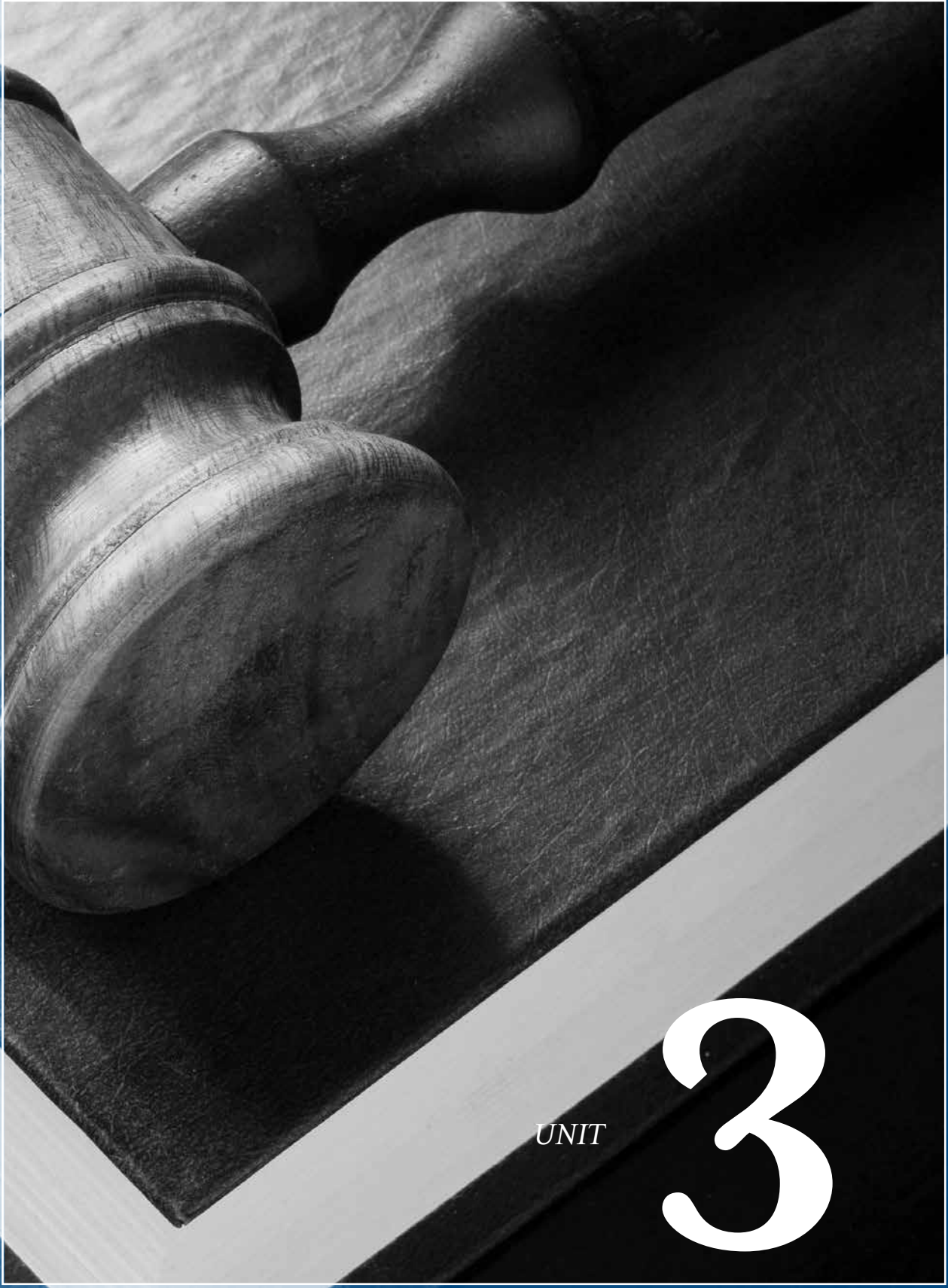
CHAPTER 2 ASSIGNMENT

Answer the following questions with at least one paragraph.

- 1. What are the differences between general revelation and special revelation?**
- 2. What have Christians traditionally meant by claiming that the Bible is the revealed Word of God? (Include a discussion of biblical inspiration and inerrancy.)**
- 3. Explain the argument that says naturalism cannot provide as reliable a basis for knowledge and truth as theism. Give your own opinion and analysis of this argument.**
- 4. How does theism, specifically biblical Christianity, offer a more reliable explanation for our ability to discover knowledge and truth than naturalism?**

Other potential questions:

- Do you agree with the definition of knowledge as “justified true belief”?
- What are other definitions of truth you have encountered?
- Do you think that scientism and the “two-story concept of truth” discussed in chapter 1 are the same thing, related, or unrelated?



UNIT

3