



# SCRIPTURE: AUTHORITY, CANON & CRITICISM

CSAP 529 & CSSR 516 (1 Unit) • Course Outline • Fall 2020 • 8/31/20-10/17/20

## I. PROFESSOR & CLASS INFORMATION

*Professor: Kevin Lewis*

<b>Course Title:</b>	<b>SCRIPTURE: AUTHORITY, CANON &amp; CRITICISM - MODULAR</b>	
<b>Course Code:</b>	CSAP/CSSR 529	<b>Credit Hours/Units:</b> 1 Unit
<b>Term:</b>	Fall 2020	<b>Class Days &amp; Time:</b> Discussion 8/31-9/27
<b>Location:</b>	Modular	<b>Dept. Secretary:</b> Megan Stricklin (562) 906-4570
<b>Office Phone:</b>	562-903-6000 X5506	<b>Secretary Email:</b> <a href="mailto:megan.stricklin@biola.edu">megan.stricklin@biola.edu</a>
<b>Office Hours:</b>	By Appointment	<b>Office Location:</b> Biola Professional Building
<b>E-Mail:</b>	<a href="mailto:kevin.lewis@biola.edu">kevin.lewis@biola.edu</a>	<b>Office Mailing Address:</b> Biola University, Christian Apologetics Program, 13800 Biola Avenue, La Mirada, CA 90639
<b>Course Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.theolaw.org">www.theolaw.org</a>	<b>ITL Website:</b> <a href="http://www.itlnet.org">www.itlnet.org</a>
<b>Dept. Website:</b>	<a href="http://biola.edu/apologetics">http://biola.edu/apologetics</a>	
<b>Discussion:</b>	<a href="http://canvas.biola.edu">http://canvas.biola.edu</a>	

## II. COURSE EXPECTATIONS

This is a required, core apologetics course. For this course, students must carefully read the course outline, complete the assigned readings, participate in online discussions, and submit a paper. (1 Unit)

## III. COURSE DESCRIPTION & TOPICS

### **CSAP 529 & CSSR 516 - Scripture: Authority, Canon & Criticism**

*A course addressing the essential issues in defending the Scriptures against perennial attacks. Topics include historical reliability, inerrancy, canonization and divine inspiration of Scripture including an examination and critique of modern biblical criticism. Required of M.A. students. Biola Catalog (This course is offered every school year.)*

**Topics:** This course surveys the vital topics of Bibliology. Topics include the historical reliability, inerrancy, canonization and divine inspiration of Scripture including an examination and critique of modern biblical criticism.

## IV. REQUIRED & RECOMMENDED TEXTBOOKS

### A. REQUIRED TEXTS

1. Köstenberger, Andreas J. and Michael J. Kruger. *The Heresy of Orthodoxy: How Contemporary Culture's Fascination with Diversity Has Reshaped Our Understanding of Early Christianity*. Crossway 2010.
2. Lewis, Kevin. *Scripture: Authority, Canon & Criticism Syllabi*  
This resource will be available in sections on my Faculty Website at <http://www.theolaw.org>.
3. Morrow, Jonathan. *Questioning the Bible: 11 Major Challenges to the Bible's Authority*. Moody Publishers, 2014.

### B. RECOMMENDED TEXTS

1. Archer, Gleason. *Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1982.
2. Elwell, Walter A., Ed. *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001.
3. Geisler, Norman L and William Nix. *From God to Us*. Chicago: Moody Press, Revised and Expanded Edition, 2012.
4. Geisler, Norman L. ed. *Inerrancy*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1980.
5. Geisler, Norman L and Thomas Howe. *The Big Book of Bible Difficulties*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2008.
6. Muller, Richard A. *Dictionary of Latin & Greek Theological Terms*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1985.

## V. DISABILITY SERVICES

Disability Services exist to assist any student who thinks he or she may need such assistance. Students desiring accommodations for this class on the basis of physical learning, psychological and/or emotional disabilities are to contact The Learning Center which houses both learning assistance and disability services. The Learning Center is located in the Biola Library, Upper Level, Room U-137, and this department can be reached by calling 562.906.4542 or by dialing extension #4542 if calling from “on campus.”

## VI. ACADEMIC HONESTY

Biola University is committed to ethical practice in teaching, scholarship, and service. As such, plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Please see the undergraduate/graduate student handbook and/or the departmental/program/school policy on academic honesty. It is imperative that you present all written, oral, and/or performed work with a clear indication of the source of that work. If it is completely your own, you are encouraged to present it as such, taking pleasure in ownership of your own created work. However, it is also imperative that you give full credit to any and all others whose work you have included in your presentation via paraphrase, direct quotation, and/or performance, citing

the name(s) or the author(s)/creator(s) and the source of the work with appropriate bibliographic information. To do otherwise is to put oneself in jeopardy of being sanctioned for an act or acts of plagiarism that can carry serious consequences up to and including expulsion from the university.

To read more about Biola's policies and procedures regarding academic integrity, view [Biola's Student Handbook](#). Another helpful resource is [Plagiarism.org](#).

## VII. PROFESSIONAL COURTESY

Students are expected to uphold the highest standards of courtesy and professionalism to the professor, classroom guests, and fellow students. This includes the employment of institutional and academic titles when addressing faculty, administrators, and other university personnel or classroom guests.

Classroom dress, proper grooming, behaviors, and hygiene should be such that they are not distracting or offensive to classmates or dishonoring to the Lord Jesus Christ and this institution.

## VIII. COURSE ALIGNMENT WITH PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

**Scripture: Authority, Canon & Criticism (CSAP 529)**: This master's-level course is a core course required of M.A. Apologetics and M.A. Science & Religion students. Offered every fall semester and sometimes in other school terms. Successful completion of this course will prepare students to demonstrate proficiency toward the accomplishment of relevant Program Learning Outcomes listed in the next section.

### **Apologetics Program Learning Outcomes**

1. To Build an intellectual framework, to demonstrate students' understanding of the faith; and to formulate responses to future challenges
2. Display and practice Christ-like character, so as to present and defend the gospel in a winsome manner and gracious spirit
3. Argue effectively to correct misconceptions about historic Christianity; to answer the perennial problems that are offered to discredit Christianity intellectually; and make the case proactively that it is reasonable to put one's faith in Christ.

## IX. COURSE OBJECTIVES AND STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

*By completion of this course including class participation, assigned readings with assigned student responses, and the practical application of doctrines learned, students will accomplish the following objectives and the following learning outcomes will be assessed and demonstrated:*

**IDEA Objective #1:** Gaining factual knowledge (biblical and theological facts, terminology, and topics) about the historical reliability, inerrancy, canonization and divine inspiration of Scripture including an examination and critique of modern biblical criticism. (*Essential* emphasis).

**STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES** (The learner will demonstrate that he or she has satisfactorily fulfilled IDEA Objective #1 by being able to):

**Identify, define and investigate** essential terminology in Theological Bibliology. (This is fulfilled by the classroom lectures and the Reaction Paper.).

**IDEA Objective #2:** Learning the theological doctrines of the historical reliability, inerrancy, canonization and divine inspiration of Scripture including an examination and critique of modern biblical criticism. (*Essential* emphasis).

**STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES** (The learner will demonstrate that he or she has satisfactorily fulfilled IDEA Objective #2 by being able to):

**1. Explain** briefly the major doctrines of the historical reliability, inerrancy, canonization and divine inspiration of Scripture including an examination and critique of modern biblical criticism. (Fulfilled by the Reaction Paper and Discussions).

**IDEA Objective #4:** Developing skills in communicating doctrines about the assigned theological topics in written form (*Important* emphasis).

**STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES** (The learner will demonstrate that he or she has satisfactorily fulfilled IDEA Objective #4 by being able to):

- 1. Produce** appropriate theological responses to theological questions by means of the Discussions and the Reaction Paper.
- 2. Develop** in written form an inventory of the student's own ability to argue for these doctrines by means of their Discussions and Reaction Paper.

## X. LEARNING TASKS (ASSIGNMENTS)

### A. COURSE OUTLINE

1. Students shall carefully read the entire course outline prior to the commencement of the course.

### B. CONFIRMATION EMAIL

1. After reading the course outline, students must send a confirmation email to the professor at [kevin.lewis@biola.edu](mailto:kevin.lewis@biola.edu) indicating the student has read the entire course outline.
2. SUBJECT LINE OF EMAIL: The “Subject” line of this email shall read **“SACC M F20 Confirmation Email.”**
3. If the student has a question about the requirements for this course, the student should ask for clarification of any part of the course outline in the confirmation email.
4. **DUE DATE: The due date for the Confirmation Email is September 7, 2020.**
5. **Biola Email Accounts**
  - a. Use your Biola email account for all required communications for this course.
  - b. As I may send notifications to the entire class via the Biola email system during the semester, students must regularly check their Biola email account.
  - c. Be certain to include your full name, course name, and the semester in which you are enrolled (e.g. Fall 2020) in each email you send.

### C. READING

Students shall complete the assigned reading for the course as listed in the course schedule. You will also complete certain written assignments in connection with your reading. (See discussion of these assignments, *infra.*)<sup>1</sup>

### D. SUMMER RESIDENCY REQUIREMENT

Students are required to attend the on-campus summer lectures in order to fulfill the residency requirement for the course.

### E. CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES REACTION PAPER

The student will write a reaction paper related to contemporary challenges to the Bible. For the paper, please observe the following procedure:

1. **Guidelines**
  - a. The student must read the entire Morrow text and the SAAC Contemporary Challenges Syllabus.
  - b. The word count for the paper should be 750 words (+ or – 50). Place the word count on the first page of your report.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Infra* is Latin for “below.” It is a common signal in scholarly works.

- c. Note that the student may elect to include or exclude the headers, footnotes, and student information in the reported word count.
- d. The paper must be typed, double-spaced with one inch margins, using a 12 point font. It must have page numbers at the bottom of each page.
- e. **Important:** Use appropriate headers to make your paper's structure evident at a glance. This means each of the three sections of the paper should have a header.
- f. **Format**
  - (1) The student *must* submit papers in the format specified in this course outline.
  - (2) At the top of the page, type the title of the assignment, your name, student number, course information (e.g., SACC, *et al.*), and the word count (e.g., 750).
  - (3) See the example, *infra*, for formatting details.
- b. Spelling and grammar count. See the explanation, *infra*, for details.
- c. **Footnotes**

Be certain to *footnote* your work. That is, when you directly quote or allude to any portion of the book or syllabus, properly reference your material.
2. **Substantive Content of the Reaction Paper – Read Carefully Here!**
  - a. Select the three (3) most important facts, issues, truths, arguments, or principles you learned from reading the assigned materials related to contemporary challenges to the Bible.
  - b. Here “important” can mean that they had the greatest impact on you or you thought they were the most important points or issues raised or, perhaps, they were the most helpful to you in some way.
  - c. For each of the three points:
    - (1) Describe and explain the specific contemporary challenge you selected.
    - (2) Explain why the point was helpful, important, or impactful to you.
  - d. Do not include either an Introduction or Conclusion section in this paper. Just write on the three selected points.
  - e. Each of the three sections should be approximately 250 words. Give the word count for each of the three sections.
  - f. See the sample outline at the end of this document for an example.

## F. SUBMITTING ASSIGNMENTS

### 1. **Required Information**

Students must have their student name, student number, course name, semester, title of the assignment, and any other required information on each submitted assignment.

### 2. **Submitting Assignments on Canvas**

- a. For all assignments, please submit them on Canvas on or before the due date.
- b. All assignments must be submitted as Microsoft Word documents.

**3. Required Labeling of Student Assignments [READ CAREFULLY HERE]**

Each assignment you submit as a MS Word document must be properly labeled.

**a. The file name shall contain the following information:**

- (1) Semester
- (2) Course Name
- (3) Assignment Name
- (4) Full Student Name (last name first name)

**b. *Reaction Paper File Name***

- (1) File Name: "SACC M F20 Reaction Paper Last Name First Name"
- (2) Example: SACC M F20 Reaction Paper Lewis Kevin

**G. ONLINE DISCUSSION & PARTICIPATION****1. DISCUSSION DATES: August 31, 2020 – September 27, 2020**

2. The student must participate in the online discussion sessions for the course.

**3. Materials for Online Discussion**

- a. The student *must* limit the discussion to the materials assigned for the SACC course.
- b. The discussion is not an open forum to discuss any topic of interest. Posts that discuss materials and topics that were not assigned for the discussion will not be counted toward the final grade.
- c. For example, if the assigned reading topic is, for example, the Canon of Scripture, students *must* discuss the Canon of Scripture and *then*, if he or she desires, the student may discuss related ideas, such as, the differences on the topic. Or, after discussing the assigned readings, the student may discuss how the topic relates to Christian living or Apologetics.

**4. Readings and Topics for the Fall 2020 SACC Modular Course****a. *Week #1: The Canon of Scripture***

(1) Discussion from August 31 through September 6

(2) Readings to discuss:

- (a) Köstenberger & Kruger, *The Heresy of Orthodoxy*, pp. 105-178

**b. *Week #2: Biblical Manuscripts, Criticism, Scribal Practices, and Transmission***

(1) Discussion from September 7 through September 13

(2) Readings to discuss:

- (a) Köstenberger & Kruger, *The Heresy of Orthodoxy*, pp. 179-236
- (b) Lewis, *SACC Textual Criticism Syllabus*

c. **Week #3: Contemporary Challenges to the Bible (Part 1)**

(1) Discussion from **September 14 through September 20**

(2) Readings to discuss:

(a) Morrow, *Questioning the Bible*, 9-234

(b) Lewis, *SACC Course Syllabus on Contemporary Challenges*

d. **Week #4: Contemporary Challenges to the Bible (Part 2)**

(1) Discussion from **September 21 through September 27**

(2) Readings to discuss:

(a) Morrow, *Questioning the Bible*, 9-234

(b) Lewis, *SACC Course Syllabus on Contemporary Challenges*

(3) Note that for the second week on this topic you should not repeat the discussion topics covered in the first week.

5. ***Nature & Role of the Course Syllabus in the Discussions***

a. Note that the *SACC Course Syllabus* is not a textbook, nor is it designed to be a textbook or comprehensive set of notes.

b. The course syllabus is a minimal outline of basic notes and definitions for discussion and lecture.

c. During the Summer Residency, I will lecture from the SACC Course Syllabus. Some of the headings in the syllabus do not have notes following the heading. I will, most likely, lecture on these topics during the summer session.

d. Note that you are taking a Theology-Apologetics class (Here, Bibliology)—with some Polemical and Elenctic theology covered as well. Thus, the syllabus, lectures and discussions will focus on arguing for true doctrine and refuting those who contradict (Titus 1:9).

6. ***Criteria & Guidelines for the Online Discussions & Debates***

a. ***Importance of the Online Discussions***

(1) The online discussions and debates are essential elements of the Modular SACC courses.

(2) Therefore, it is imperative that students complete the readings prior to each discussion and debate and actively participate throughout the semester.

b. ***Purpose of the Online Discussions***

(1) The assigned readings are designed to inform students about particular theological topics, guide thinking, and provoke thought.



- (2) The reading should be done actively, not passively. If this is done, three things are likely to occur:
  - (a) Request Clarification: Sometimes students will not fully understand the material and will need clarification;
  - (b) Disagree with the Author: Students will sometimes disagree with the author's view; and
  - (c) Provoke Thought: The reading will provoke thought in new directions and lead to applications beyond those described by an author.
- (3) The online discussions are intended to be an opportunity to receive and give clarification, express disagreement, and explore the implications of what has been learned.

c. ***Disagreements***

- (1) Students may express disagreement with the readings and with other students. Students may not, however, argue against Biola's Articles of Faith and Theological Distinctives.
- (2) The manner of disagreement must remain irenic at all times.
- (3) If a student violates this rule, the professor may:
  - (a) End a particular discussion thread;
  - (b) Prevent offending students from further participation in that discussion thread;
  - (c) Pursue additional disciplinary actions if warranted.

d. ***Canvas – Discussion Board***

- (1) The venue for the online discussions will be the Canvas Discussion Board on Biola University's Canvas website at <https://canvas.biola.edu>
- (2) The Apologetics Department should have provided information to each student regarding how to use Canvas. If not, contact the department secretary.

e. ***Grading Criteria for Online Discussions & Debates – READ CAREFULLY!***

- (1) **Posts Based on Readings**: Students must discuss in their posts the materials and issues raised in the required course readings. Off-Topic Discussions will not count toward your discussion grade. Off Topic Posts will be deleted from the forum.
- (2) **Number of Posts: Three (3) Substantial Posts Per Week (Minimum)**
  - (a) The student shall submit a *minimum* of three (3) substantial posts for each discussion week. Thus, each student shall have posted a *minimum* of twelve (12) substantive posts during the course discussions.
  - (b) A substantive post will be two to three (2-3) well developed paragraphs in length.
  - (c) Note that each discussion week is a separate grading unit. The student must fulfill the criteria (e.g., number of posts, quality of posts) for each discussion week.

(d) Note that the Discussion Board is an Academic Forum. As such, the student should refrain from posting comments of a personal nature and comments not related to the course discussions.

(3) **Quality of Posts: Read Carefully Here!!!**

- (a) A substantive post will be two to three (2-3) well developed paragraphs in length.
- (b) The preferred substantive post would be in the form of an *argument* for your view, an *argument* (or refutation) against another viewpoint, or *analysis and application* of the assigned material. Your goal is to *prove* the truth of the Christian Religion. Mere unsupported assertions of opinion will not be considered as a substantive post. As Christian Apologists and Polemicists it is essential that you learn to argue your points, rather than merely assert them.
- (c) Other types of substantive posts should be thoughtful, carefully reasoned, thought provoking and contain keen observations about the subject matter.
- (d) Note that this is a graduate level discussion forum. Thus, the quality of the posts should reflect the student's commitment to graduate level study with *excellence*.
- (e) EXAMPLES: See the examples of high quality student posts at the end of this course outline.

(4) **Timing of Posts Read Carefully Here!!!**

- (a) While the student does not need to submit a post on each day of the discussion week, the student must not wait until the end of the discussion period to engage in discussion with other students.
- (b) The purpose of the discussion assignment is to engage other students in meaningful discussion and debate. This task cannot be accomplished if the student submits all posts on the last day or two of the discussion period.
- (c) Note that students who fail to engage in discussion throughout the period will have their grades reduced accordingly.
- (d) Students must have their first substantive discussion post submitted on Canvas by the end of the 2nd day of the discussion period to avoid a grade penalty. If the student is late in posting, the penalties for late work will apply.

f. ***Student Initiative for Posts***

- (1) Students must take the initiative to generate good discussion of the reading material and the topics covered in a given week. This does not mean that the student must start a new discussion thread to receive credit.
- (2) This may be done by posting arguments, refutations, rebuttals, observations, disagreements or questions of a clarifying, provocative or even controversial nature—provided the questions serve to assist students to better understand the issues. Students may then reply to each other's questions and responses.

### 7. *Professor's Role in the Discussions*

- a. The Professor will monitor the discussion groups and will respond to questions directly posed to him—if a response is warranted.
- b. Also, when warranted, the professor will proffer questions or comments to help students grapple with key issues or provoke thought.

## XI. IMPORTANT DUE DATES

Date	Events & Assignments Due
8/31	Week#1 Discussion Begins
9/7	Week#2 Discussion Begins / Confirmation Email Due
9/14	Week#3 Discussion Begins
9/21	Week#4 Discussion Begins
10/17	Contemporary Challenges Reflection Paper Due

## XII. ASSESSMENT (GRADING)

### A. GRADING CHART (ASSIGNMENT WEIGHT)

The value of each assignment as it relates to your final grade can be seen in the following scale:

Assignment	% of Final Grade
Contemporary Challenges Reaction Paper	50%
Online Discussion	50%

### B. GRADING SCALE (LETTER GRADE CUT-OFFS)

Final grades will be awarded according to the following scale:

Graduate	Scale
A = 96-100 points (Excellent)	C = 78-80 points (Average)
A- = 93-95 points	C- = 75-77 points
B+ = 90-92 points	D+ = 73-74 points
B = 87-89 points (Above Average)	D = 71-72 points (Below Average)
B- = 84-86 points	D- = 69-70 points
C+ = 81-83 points	F = 0-68 points (Fail)

## C. GRADING CRITERIA

### 1. Quality of Student Work

- a. In order for a student to receive an “A” grade on any assignment, the student must do *outstanding*, graduate level work.
- b. If the student submits *average* or *above average* graduate level work, the assigned letter grade will reflect the quality of the work submitted.

### 2. Formalities & Mechanics of Assignments

- a. **Format & Required Information:** At the top of the first page of all written assignments the student must have the following:
  - (1) Title of the assignment,
  - (2) Student’s name,
  - (3) Student’s identification number,
  - (4) Title of the course,
  - (5) Date of the course (e.g., Fall 2020),
  - (6) Name of the professor, and
  - (7) Additional information requested for that specific assignment (e.g., word count). The student may examine the exemplars of the assignments given at the end of this Course Outline for further clarification.
- b. **Following Instructions:** The grade for student papers and assignments will be reduced if the student fails to follow the directions listed in this course outline. Please consult the course outline when completing your assignments.
- c. Note that the paper grade will be *reduced one point* for each instance of a failure to conform to the guidelines. Please check your work before you submit it for grading.

### 3. Late Work

- a. All assignments must be submitted on time. Late assignments will *be reduced one percentage point* for each calendar day they are tardy.
- b. Only in the case of *extreme* emergencies will an exception to this policy be granted.

### 4. Guidelines for Citations

- a. Students must cite the source (e.g., have a footnote) for any idea found in the student’s paper that is not the student’s original idea or a matter of common knowledge.
- b. Secondary source citations must be properly cited with reference to the primary text. Thus, if an author cites another author, the footnote must reflect this citation-in-a-citation relationship. See the footnote below for an example.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, first ed. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966), 109, cited in Walter Martin, *The Maze of Mormonism*, revised and enlarged edition (Ventura: Regal Books, 1978), 178-179. [Example of a secondary source citation]

## 5. Grading Standards for All Written Work

Whereas Biola University desires to maintain the highest standards with respect to the composition of all written work, any student paper exhibiting poor grammar, spelling errors, typographical errors, or other substandard academic expression shall have the overall grade for that paper reduced accordingly. Generally, a paper will be deemed substandard and ineligible to receive an "A" grade when it averages three or more compositional errors per page. Moreover, at the discretion of the professor, the substandard paper may be returned to the student for correction and resubmission with appropriate grade penalties. Graduate papers are expected to demonstrate a higher level of academic expression than undergraduate papers. Students deficient in writing skills may seek assistance at the Biola Writing Center.

### **D. INCOMPLETE GRADE**

In virtually every case that students do not meet the course requirements and when required course tasks are not submitted to the professor, such students should anticipate receiving a failing grade. In rare and unusual situations (e.g., serious illness of the student or illness or death in a student's immediate family), the student may formally request an Incomplete Grade.

A temporary mark of "IN" (Incomplete Grade) will be issued in special cases when approved by the Associate Provost of Academic Administration for undergraduate students or the dean of the respective graduate school. "IN" grades course assignments are normally completed no later than five weeks after the end of the term. In the event of the inability of a student to complete the coursework by the approved deadline, the Office of the Registrar will assign the grade which the student has earned by the end of term.

To read more about Biola's policies and procedures regarding absences, view [Biola's Student Handbook](#).

### **E. THE PRIVACY ACT**

In order to comply with the Privacy Act, professors are not able to leave graded papers and exams in offices or designated areas for the purpose of returning those items to students.

## XIII. GENERAL CLASS INFORMATION & PROFESSOR POLICIES

### A. DOCTRINAL EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENTS:

#### BIOLA'S ARTICLES OF FAITH & STATEMENT OF BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES

1. Since its inception, Biola has been a conservative evangelical protestant institution. Biola's theological views are affirmed in its Articles of Faith & Statement of Biblical Principles (AFSBP), which function as the doctrinal standard for the university. This course is taught with a presumption that these doctrines are true. As such, students may not actively argue against Biola's doctrinal views in this course. Biola's AFSBP can be viewed at <http://www.biola.edu/about/doctrinal-statement/>.
2. Since Biola's AFSBP does not address every possible theological issue, the university permits a diversity of opinion on issues not covered by the AFSBP, such as the doctrines involved in the Calvinism-Arminianism debate.
3. Finally, note that this expectation is not intended to hinder important reflection, discussion, or queries on these matters. Students are encouraged to engage in candid discussions, ask questions about any theological issue, raise counterarguments they have encountered, or even express genuine doubts or confusion about these items. The goal is to foster genuine camaraderie, unity, and *koinonia* among students as fellow travelers in their theological education.

### B. LECTURES, SYLLABUS & COPYRIGHT

1. The course syllabus, handouts, Power Point presentations, and class lectures are the intellectual property of the professor. As such they are subject to the protections of Federal Copyright Law (Title 17 of the United States Code).
2. Students desiring to copy course materials, printed or electronic, or record lectures must first obtain permission from the professor. The professor reserves all rights unless explicitly waived.

### C. MISCELLANEOUS POLICIES

1. *Fairness to All Students*
  - a. Please do not request an exemption from the rules or to have a deadline extended unless there is an unanticipated emergency. It is presumed that all students and faculty are busy with jobs, church, family and other issues. Students must adjust their schedules to meet the deadlines. If not, they will receive the appropriate grade penalty.
  - b. Please do not ask me to change your grade unless I have made an error in calculating the grade. There is a single grading standard for all students. I will not create a different grading standard for any individual student.

**2. *Email Etiquette***

- a. Use your Biola email account for all communications for this course.
- b. Please treat your emails as formal communications. Use complete sentences. Do not use a “texting” style for your messages.
- c. Be certain to include your full name and the course name in each email until I direct you to do otherwise.
- d. Be certain to include the program in which you are enrolled such as Talbot, or the M.A. Apologetics Program.

**3. *Technology in the Classroom (During Summer Lectures)***

- a. *Cell Phones:* Please turn off or set to silent mode all devices, electronic or otherwise, that may cause a distraction in class. Items include, but are not limited to, cell phones, PDAs, iPods, and pagers. It is an expectation that both faculty and students will neither take calls, nor leave the classroom to take calls during class—except in the case of emergencies.
- b. *Computers:* Computers and PDAs may be used during class for note taking purposes. Any other use, such as for email, is not permitted. Students must wait for breaks or the end of class to use their computers for non-note taking purposes.

**4. *Minimizing Interruptions and Distractions (During Summer Lectures)***

- a. *Talking:* Please do not talk in class. It is a distraction for me and your fellow students.
- b. *Work:* Please do not work on assignments for other classes while in the classroom.
- c. *Punctuality:* Please try to be punctual.
- d. *Leaving Early:* If a student must leave the class before the scheduled ending time, the student must inform the professor of this fact and sit as close to the door as possible to minimize the interruption to the class when she leaves.

**5. *Classroom Etiquette (During Summer Lectures)***

- a. Do not interrupt either the professor or a fellow student when they are talking.
- b. Students must raise their hands to ask a question. Often, I will not answer a question immediately if I am in the middle of a lecture. When I have finished a particular section of the lecture, I will ask for questions.

***D. ATTENDANCE (SUMMER LECTURES)***

1. Regular attendance of the lectures is required. I will take attendance in each class session to verify your presence or absence.
2. Per University policy, if you miss more than 20% of the class sessions for a course you will not be able to receive credit for the course.
3. Arriving late or leaving early counts as a partial absence in proportion to the time you missed.
4. Note that the professor has no discretion to grant an exception to this policy.

## **B. NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

The University deplores the unfair treatment of individuals based on race, gender, socio-economic status, age, physical disability, or cultural differences, regardless whether such treatment is intentional or simply resultant from careless or insensitive behavior. Rather, employees and members of the student body should embrace the expectation of Scripture to love God with all their being and their neighbors as themselves.

As Christian scholars we are keenly aware of the power of language, and believe in treating others with dignity. As such, it is important that our language be equitable and prejudice free. Good writing and speech do not make unsubstantiated or irrelevant generalizations about personal qualities such as age, disability, economic class, ethnicity, marital status parentage, political or religious beliefs, race, sex, or sexual orientation. Respectful use of language is particularly important when referring to those outside of the religious and lifestyle commitments of those in the Biola community. By working toward precision and clarity of language, we mark ourselves as serious and respectful scholars, and we model the Christ-like quality of invitation.

Avoid the use of stereotypes or terminology that demeans persons or groups based on age, disability, ethnicity, gender, race, language or national origin. Avoid drawing attention to irrelevant identifiers of race or gender. Avoid gender-specific language when referencing people in general. Avoid terms that assume the universality of human experience, and in particular presume the normativity of the socially dominant group.

## **C. CONFIDENTIALITY AND SEXUAL MISCONDUCT**

As an instructor, one of my responsibilities is to help create a safe learning environment on our campus. I also have a responsibility in my role as a faculty member to share information I hear regarding sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, sexual exploitation, and gender/sex-based discrimination with the Title IX Coordinator and/or the Campus Safety Response Team. Confidential resources available to students on campus include the Biola Counseling Center (562-903-4800) and the Student Health Center (562-903-4841). Both the Title IX Coordinator and the Campus Safety Response Team understand the sensitive nature of these situations and can provide information about available on and off-campus resources, such as counseling and psychological services, medical treatment, academic support, university housing, safety measures and other forms of assistance. More information about confidential resources on and off-campus, additional resources, and the University's Sexual Misconduct Policy is available at <https://www.biola.edu/title-ix>.

## **D. ADDITIONAL UNIVERSITY AND/OR DEPARTMENT POLICIES**

All university and departmental policies affecting student work, appeals, and grievances, as outlined in the Undergraduate Catalog and/or Department Handbook will apply, unless otherwise indicated in this syllabus.



## XIV. SAMPLE OUTLINES

### A. SAMPLE REACTION PAPER (NOTE: THIS IS AN “A” PAPER. )

#### *CIVIL GOVERNMENT*

By Robert Culver

Student Name: Luther Martin

Student Number: 103117

Theology of Civil Government

Fall 1517 – Professor Kevin Lewis

Culver Reaction Paper

Word Count (Excluding Headers, Footnotes, and Student Information): 799

#### **Fact #1: Paul Was a Shrewd Evangelist in Deciding Where to Travel (Word Count: 274)**

**1. Issue.** Culver’s explanation of the four levels of Roman society—slave, *peregrinus*, *Latinus*, and *civitas*—and their corresponding legal rights was quite enlightening.<sup>4</sup> For example, it helped me to better understand why Paul, a full citizen (*civitas*), was exempt from crucifixion and therefore beheaded, while Peter, a free man but only a provincial *peregrine*, was crucified.<sup>5</sup>

Even more fascinating, however, was Culver’s observation that “Paul was careful to move not only within the bounds of the empire (long observed), but within certain administrative districts and municipalities. . . . [W]herever Christianity had been preached, Roman authorities had come forward to restrain the evil forces seeking to destroy it.”<sup>6</sup> I was unaware that Paul concentrated his ministry on the most fully “Romanized” elements in the population of the cities he visited.<sup>7</sup> I was also unaware that Paul intentionally *avoided* particular cities during his travels

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<sup>4</sup> Robert D. Culver, *Civil Government: A Biblical View* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2000), 212.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 220, 239.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 221.

(e.g., Commagene), specifically those where the Roman rule of law was less likely to be followed, and that he targeted Roman cities where his legal rights would be upheld.<sup>8</sup>

**2. Importance.** It was instructive to see the shrewd manner in which Paul made use of the legal rights and protections granted to him by the Roman government.<sup>9</sup> Given Jesus' execution at the hands of Pontius Pilate and Nero's brutal persecution, I was surprised to learn that Rome's system of religious tolerance, due process of law, and orderly civil government was the church's *ally* during its early decades. Sadly, these same religious liberties that faded in the first century are now beginning to fade in the West. Nevertheless, I came away with some practical biblical guidance for utilizing secular legal protections when conducting ministry.

**Fact #2: Romans 13:1–7 Can Be Squared with the American Revolution (Word Count: 268)**

**1. Issue.** Culver states that Romans 13:1–7 is the most important text for understanding “the subject of the place of human civil government in the providence of God.”<sup>10</sup> Culver interprets this passage as “a strong demand that every Christian must obey the *de facto* government”<sup>11</sup> in the region where he lives, because “resistance to constituted government is resistance to God’s ordinance.”<sup>12</sup>

What then of the American Revolution? As Englishmen, the American colonists still retained a number of legal rights and freedoms.<sup>13</sup> Moreover, King George III never demanded from his subjects the devotion that belongs to God alone. Nevertheless, American ministers were

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 221.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 222.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 244.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 248.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 251.

essential in convincing the American population to support independence. As William McLoughlin observes, the American Revolution was “a Religious Revival,”<sup>14</sup> and among Protestant sermons “religious motives were paramount.”<sup>15</sup> How is this consistent with Romans 13:1–7?

Culver offers a clue in his earlier chapter on Messianic expectations: “[T]he American Revolution [was] [a] conservative revolution[], not [a] radical one[]. . . [It was] the act[] of official civil authorities who thought of themselves as acting in the interests of and as agents of orderly, legal government[.]”<sup>16</sup>

**2. Helpfulness.** What stands out to me is the distinction between *forceful resistance* to legitimate government, such as the *coup d'état* of the Bolshevik revolution, and peaceful civil disobedience. Those who signed the Declaration of Independence took up arms *after* the British attacked, not before, and sought “to preserve the values and established order of the past rather than to destroy them.”<sup>17</sup> It seems that the Founders launched the *right kind* of revolution, and in doing so they acted consistently with Romans 13:1–7.

### **Fact #3: Rehabilitation Theories of Criminal Punishment Are Flawed (Word Count: 257)**

**1. Issue.** One of my legal casebooks remarks that “utilitarian ideas [such as rehabilitation] were absorbed into a religiously inspired humanitarian reform movement that

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<sup>13</sup> “[T]he American colonists fought for freedom as some of the freest and most prosperous people of their time.” Os Guinness, *A Free People's Suicide: Sustainable Freedom and the American Future* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2012), 45.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 109, citing William G. McLoughlin, “The American Revolution as a Religious Revival,” *New England Quarterly* 40 (March 1967): 99–110.

<sup>15</sup> Culver, *Civil Government*, 109, citing Alan Heimert, *Religion and the American Mind from the Great Awakening to the Revolution* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1966), x, 668.

<sup>16</sup> Culver, *Civil Government*, 108.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

identified punishment with penance and spiritual redemption.”<sup>18</sup> As Culver notes, this thinking is deeply misguided: “The state is not to shape [men’s] opinions. Nor should the state forgive their crimes. This is God’s prerogative. . . . Civil government by itself cannot reform individuals.”<sup>19</sup>

**2. Helpfulness.** I thought Culver did an excellent job of marshalling the biblical data to demonstrate that the government has no legitimate role in *reforming* criminals. Culver’s warning that “government cannot make [men] industrious, wise, or good, for government powers cannot touch the heart of man wherein lie the springs of emotion”<sup>20</sup> is a sound one. Consequently, I agree that the government “should never be in direct charge of moral instruction.”<sup>21</sup> While we should expect the government to restrain violent men and provide legal protections for life and property, only the church and families can serve as reformatory agents for criminals, for these are God’s intended vehicles of transformative grace.<sup>22</sup>

Culver’s theology of civil government therefore has significant implications for prosecutors, defense counsel, criminal jurisprudence, prison reform, sentencing guidelines, and the like. Government efforts at rehabilitation are not noble; they wrongly blend criminal justice with spiritual redemption in an act of secular hubris that is doomed to fail. Should I ever find myself in a position to shape public policy, Culver has provided me with sound reasons for advocating retributive theories of justice that reflect the proper relationship between God, man, and state.

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<sup>18</sup> John Kaplan, Robert Weisberg, and Guyora Binder, *Criminal Law: Cases and Materials*, 6th ed. (New York: Aspen Publishers, 2008), 32.

<sup>19</sup> Culver, *Civil Government*, 275.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 275–76.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 276.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

**B. REACTION PAPER EXAMPLE OUTLINE**  
**CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES REACTION PAPER**

Student Name: Dean Winchester  
Student Number: 11223345  
CSAP 541 – Scripture: Authority, Canon & Criticism  
Fall 2020 - Lewis  
Word Count: 749

**A. Argument/Point/Truth/Etc. One: Title (Word Count: 247)**

This section will be a brilliant, but concise summary of one of your selected best arguments, *etc.* followed by the reasons why you believe it was a persuasive and helpful argument.

1. *Summary of the Argument/Point/Issue*
  
2. *Reasons Why the Argument/Point/Issue was Helpful/Important/Impactful*

**B. Argument/Point/Truth/Etc. Two: Title (Word Count: 253)**

This section will be a brilliant, but concise summary of one of your selected best arguments, *etc.* followed by the reasons why you believe it was a persuasive and helpful argument.

1. *Summary of the Argument/Point/Issue*
  
2. *Reasons Why the Argument was Helpful/Important/Impactful*

**C. Argument/Point/Truth/Etc. Three: Title (Word Count: 249)**

This section will be a brilliant, but concise summary of one of your selected best arguments, *etc.* followed by the reasons why you believe it was a persuasive and helpful argument.

1. *Summary of the Argument/Point/Issue*
  
2. *Reasons Why the Argument was Helpful/Important/Impactful*

## XV. EXAMPLES OF HIGH QUALITY, SUBSTANTIVE STUDENT POSTS FOR CANVAS DISCUSSIONS

### A. RESPONSE-QUESTION TYPE POST

#### Thread: The Apollinarian & Monothelite Heresies

I echo what Albus says. As apologists, we should ardently defend both the full humanity of Christ as well as the full divinity of Christ because in order for Christ to save us wretched sinners, He HAS to be both! Being all God isn't good enough. He also has to be fully man in order for the atonement to fly because if He isn't fully man, then he can't represent mankind on the cross.

Also, you asked, "*Why is it that the church universal in A.D. 451 thought it was essential to declare Christ "consubstantial" with us with a "rational soul," yet without sin? It is this aspect of biblical Christology that is affected by the Apollinarian and Monothelite heresies.*"

The reason they felt it necessary to declare "Christ 'consubstantial' with us with a rational soul" was to combat Apollinarianism which maintained that the Logos replaced "the rational spirit of the man Jesus" (*Approaches to Christology*, Lewis). If true, then Jesus' soul was not human, but rather was divine.

This is a problem because Jesus having a divine soul does not represent our humanity because mankind does not have a divine soul, mankind has a human soul. Therefore, the claim of Apollinarianism disqualifies Jesus from being able to act as a true representative for mankind on the cross, because in order for Jesus to do the redemptive work for mankind, He must be fully human in BOTH body and soul/spirit - in body isn't good enough.

The same holds true of Monothelism which claims that Christ only had one will which according to the handout *Approaches to Christology* means soul. Same problem here. Again, it is not sufficient for Christ to just have one soul. He must be both fully God and fully man which means He MUST have two wills or souls, the divine and the human, in order to represent mankind on the cross.

### B. BOOK RELATED SUMMARY & ANALYSIS

#### Thread: Slavery in the Old Testament

In Chapter 12, Culver addresses property and slavery in the Mosaic commonwealth. In particular, I think his discussion about slavery is pertinent to a certain kind of challenge we will face as apologists. "The Bible (OT) doesn't condemn slavery and even has rules about it, so therefore God condones slavery" or "The Bible is obviously merely a product of an Ancient Near East culture and morally inferior to our standards today, because it endorses slavery - or at least doesn't condemn it" are often used as challenges to Christianity in general and the Bible in particular. What does Culver note that can help us answer these challenges?

First, modern criticisms of the regulation rather than abolition of slavery in the Bible arise out of a very narrow understanding of what constitutes slavery. What was called "slavery" in the ancient world does indeed have modern counterparts in our country, such as those forcibly

detained in jails and prisons, or the contractual relation of what used to be called "indentured servitude." Moreover, our penal system imprisons people for destruction of property or embezzlement; the ancients rather made them work to pay for their crimes, so the argument can be made that there was less involuntary servitude then than today. Slavery in the ancient world served society then in the same way as our prisons (whether domestic or of war) do today.

Second, the Mosaic law was for a specific time, and as such not only acknowledged slavery but *regulated* it in such a way as to protect the rights of all parties. The culture of the time viewed hired service as being just as incompatible with freedom as slavery, but neither was regarded as degrading. A permanent state of slavery under the Mosaic law was wholly voluntary.

Third, there were only a few circumstances under which an Israelite could become the slave of another under the law: to sell oneself voluntarily to gain financial security for his family or pay a debt, etc. (creditors could not seize him or his children and sell them into slavery); for restitution of theft; or a daughter could be sold by her father to another (much like a dowry) and that man then had an obligation to raise her as a daughter, protecting her chastity and providing for her physical welfare. It was a capital crime to kidnap persons for later sale as slaves, and so it is improper to draw exact parallels between humane and merciful slavery in the Bible and the African slavery that more easily comes to mind. The law, if followed, ensured that a slave's treatment would be humane and just. Hence there was little social stigma attached to slavery in ancient Israel, nor was it considered degrading to be a slave or own them.

Also, though, Culver doesn't mention this, it is important to remember that the objector here is making a moral objection, and he must account for that. Why is slavery wrong? Aside from the issue that there is often equivocation here - slavery then was not the same as slavery now, and it fulfilled certain social needs for which we now use prisons - the objector has to account for the moral law that makes slavery (in the sense they usually think of it today) bad.

### **C. REACTION & ANALYSIS OF READING AND LECTURES**

#### **Thread: Release from penalty leads to freedom in Christ**

I have known for a long time that there's been a disconnect between my cerebral knowledge of Christ and my personal relationship with Him. I've recognized that God has become more of an abstract concept to me than someone with whom I am intimately involved. I've also known why this has happened, namely that I hold false beliefs about God (misconceptions of His real character), and therefore do not trust Him. As much as I'd like to trust Him, I can't, because I don't (or at least I didn't prior to this discussion) *really* believe He loves me, delights in me, or wants what's best for me. How could He, when I've sinned such as I have? While I could say with absolute confidence that God sent His son to die for me, this truth did not manifest itself in feelings of peace and freedom in Christ. It was head knowledge that did not translate into my daily Christian living. My relationship to the Trinity has been one of fear and expectation of punishment.

And then I discovered the doctrine of the atonement.

#### **JUSTICE AND MERCY**

Shedd writes, "The rite of sacrifice under the Old Testament taught that God is both just and merciful: just, in that his law requires death for sin; merciful, in that he permits and provides a

vicarious death for sin. In this way it deepened fear and inspired hope-f ear of divine holiness and hope in divine mercy" (686). The fear of divine holiness permeated my life, but hope in His mercy eluded me. But I began to see that hope in God's mercy is valid when one considers, *really* considers, the incredible ramifications of His sacrificial act. God, being moved by compassion for His creation, not only permitted a vicarious atonement to satisfy His wrath against sin, but also provided the sacrifice in Himself. But that's not all.

#### SUFFERING AND ATONEMENT

I was amazed to discover that the essential ingredient in atonement is suffering. In the Levitical system, a perfect ram would be used, and the priest would sacrifice it on the altar as a vicarious atonement for sin. I had assumed it was simply the blood and death of the animal that was necessary. But according to Shedd, the essential element is the suffering. Not only did the ram die in agonizing pain, but the participants suffered also since the death of the ram was a complete loss to them. They could derive no benefit from the sacrifice. The result of this infliction of suffering upon the sacrificial ram was that God's justice was satisfied, the sins of the offending party were "covered up" and hidden from God's sight since, and the sins of the offending party were forgiven.

The element of suffering in atonement radically transforms our understanding of what's at stake. In short, the infliction of suffering (the essence of atonement) is applied to the substitute rather than the guilty. This is profound for Christians since it means that Christ suffered for our sins so that we do not have to. Indeed, we will never have to pay the due penalty for our sins. We will never be inflicted with suffering by God in order to personally atone for our transgressions. For the believer, this is extraordinary news indeed, which we can embrace with confidence. After all, "divine mercy is seen more in the cause than in the effect, more in the 'atonement' for sin than in the 'remission' of sin, more in 'expiation' than in 'forgiveness,' more in the vicarious infliction than in the personal noninfliction" (698). Our temptation is to doubt that Christ's atonement was sufficient. But for God, the difficult part is in laying the foundation for the release of penalty. But if God's mercy is great enough to move Him to provide atonement for man's sin, it is certainly great enough to follow through on the consequences of such an act. As Shedd states, "If God's compassion is great enough to induce him to lay man's punishment upon his own Son, it is surely great enough to induce him not to lay it upon the believer" (699). If we are in Christ, we can be confident that our sins are forgiven. God is not "out to get us" or make us suffer in payment for our sins. Christ has already suffered on our behalf.

#### FEAR OF DIVINE RETRIBUTION

This understanding of Christ's atoning work revolutionizes my faith because I have lived in fear of divine retribution all my life. It's a human tendency to misunderstand the nature of God and expect His wrath instead of love. But perhaps this primary struggle in my Christian walk stems from my parental examples. Both of my parents, who divorced when I was three, were explosive in their anger. Where discipline is meant to be corrective, my childhood punishments produced shame, embarrassment, fear and distrust. And I have projected these things onto God. When I sin (as I am prone to do), I do not run to Him with confidence and boldness in childlike faith armed with the knowledge that He loves me and my sins are already forgiven. Rather, I withdraw and protect and wait for His explosive wrath, knowing that I deserve every bit of it. But all of this is misguided in light of a proper understanding of Christ's work of atonement.

#### FREEDOM AS A RESULT OF TRUE KNOWLEDGE

The center of divine compassion and mercy is in Christ's work of atonement. Once vicarious atonement has occurred, forgiveness is easy to deliver. I need not fear that God will cause me to



suffer to pay for my sins. Indeed, it would be unjust for Him to do so since Christ has already suffered on my behalf. But as Shedd points out, "The objective atonement is intended to be subjectively appropriated by the act of faith in it" (708). This is where lack of knowledge robbed me of freedom in Christ.

Since I had a faulty understanding of Christ's atoning work, I could not experience forgiveness for my sins. I continued to feel guilty and ashamed, unable to appropriate the freedom from suffering Christ provided. Shedd says, "The priestly work of Christ has an influence upon the human conscience similar to that which it has upon divine justice. Man's moral sense is pacified by Christ's atonement. Peace is everywhere in Scripture represented as the particular effect produced by faith in Christ's blood" (708). But if this is true, where was my peace? Why was I unable to experience the effect of peace as a result of Christ's satisfaction of justice? If peace is the evidence of faith in Christ, could it be that I'm not really saved? Or was this encounter part of my journey of sanctification? Scripture says, "they shall know the truth, and the truth shall set them free." I was not experiencing freedom because I did not really *know* this truth.

#### CHRIST PAID THE PENALTY, PERIOD.

Shedd writes, "What therefore God's justice demands, man's conscience demands" (708). This is indeed true. God demands payment for sin. Therefore, my conscience also demands it. But this is exactly why I live in absolute fear of punishment. I am intensely aware of my own sin nature (my sins are not covered from *my* eyes), and since the Holy Spirit lives in me, I naturally agree with God's demand for justice. Knowing I deserve to be punished, therefore, I anticipate God's wrath. However, I have failed to understand that this demand for justice has already been satisfied by Christ's sacrifice on the cross. My fear and expectation of suffering has been based on a lack of understanding regarding the doctrine of atonement. Now that I know the payment has been satisfied, I can be at peace with God. "The instant any individual man ... believes that divine justice is thus satisfied, his conscience is at rest" (709).

#### NEW CONFIDENCE IN CHRIST

I have experienced a freedom in Christ that has never before been possible. By studying the doctrine of atonement, I have had new insight into God's great love and compassion for me. I can hold God's wrath and mercy at the same time without contradiction. And I can surrender my fears of divine retribution knowing that while I deserve to suffer for my sins, God in His goodness has spared me by providing a vicarious substitute in Christ. I understand now what Shedd means when he says, "The belief by which men obtain personal benefit, namely, mental peace and blessedness, from the fact of Christ's atonement involves trust and reliance upon Christ" (709). His self-sacrifice was sufficient. Praise be to God

## **XVI. TEACHING & LEARNING THEOLOGY AT BIOLA**

### **A. TEACHING & LEARNING THEOLOGY AT AN INTERDENOMINATIONAL UNIVERSITY**

1. Unlike other academic disciplines, there are inherent pedagogical difficulties associated with teaching theology at an interdenominational Christian university.
2. Unlike a Greek or Hebrew course, all students arrive at Biola holding a wide variety of ideas about Christian theology and what it ought to be. This is not true of most other disciplines. For example, most new NT Greek students will not have an opinion about whether New Testament Greek should have a 5 case or 8 case system, but just about everyone has an opinion on issues such as young or old earth creationism, charismatic gifts, or the Calvinism & Arminianism issue.
3. As such, it is common for Biola students to be in disagreement with each other and the professor on discretionary theological issues, that is, doctrinal topics not covered by the Biola Doctrinal Statement and Explanatory Notes.
4. The key for the Biola community is to be charitable towards other believers regarding discretionary theological matters permitted by the Biola doctrinal statement. See the SACC Course Outline on page 12 for doctrinal expectation for students.

### **B. THIS IS A SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY & APOLOGETICS COURSE.**

1. This course is primarily a systematic theology & apologetics course.
2. As such, the methodology and substantive content of the course will reflect this fact. Other academic disciplines and methodologies, such as those employed in philosophy, will be considered and employed at the discretion of the professor.
3. The goal for this course is for the student to learn essential Bibliology and be able to defend it.

### **C. BIOLA IS A CONSERVATIVE EVANGELICAL PROTESTANT UNIVERSITY.**

1. Biola is a conservative evangelical Protestant university.
2. As such, it is defined by the distinctives of the Protestant Reformation. These include, but are not limited to, the following doctrines:
  - a. Justification is by Grace alone (*Sola Gratia*),
  - b. through Faith alone (*Sola Fide*),
  - c. in Christ alone (*Solus Christus*),
  - d. to the Glory of God alone (*Soli Deo Gloria*); and

e. *Sola Scriptura*

- (1) *Sola Scriptura* means the Sixty-Six Books of the Protestant Canon of Scripture are both necessary and sufficient for all matters pertaining to the Christian life.
  - (2) They are the final say on all matters they address (*Sola Scriptura*).
  - (3) The writings of the church fathers, creeds and confessions, and a ministerial use of philosophy can be helpful in the task of doing systematic theology, but they are secondary authorities.
3. Since the student has decided to enroll in this type of institution, that is, a conservative, evangelical Protestant institution, the expectation is that each student will reflect these and other relevant theological presumptions in their work.