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Course: PHILO 4373, Christian Apologetics Place: S-116  
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**FINAL EXAM**

*Please answer the following questions in the space allotted—do not write outside the given borders. Answer all the parts of each question. Be concise. **This exam is closed-book.***

**Quick identifications (provide full names where applicable) [1 point each]:**

1.1 *Greatest English-speaking apologist of the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century*  
**C.S. Lewis**

1.2 *Most prominent atheist currently in the English-speaking world*  
**Richard Dawkins**

1.3 *The Cal Berkeley law professor who is widely regarded as the architect of the intelligent design movement*  
**Stephen Johnson**

1.4 *The “two tasks” of the Christian scholar*  
**Renewing the Soul / Renewing the Mind**

1.5 *What “classical apologetics” adds to “evidential apologetics”*  
**The philosophical arguments for God’s existence. These lead from Atheism to Theism**

1.6 *Argument that derives God’s existence from the very concept of God*  
**Ontological Argument**

1.7 *Scottish philosopher who argued that miracles can never be rationally justified*  
**Bertrand Russell**

1.8 *The worldview most common in the secular academy*  
**Naturalism – Both Philosophical and Methodological**

1.9 *The truthful traitors and the \_\_\_\_\_ [fill in the blank]*  
**Loyal Liars**

1.10 *Authored the axiom: “that which is not assumed is not healed”*  
**Athanasius**

**Define the following terms and briefly note their significance [3 points each]:**

*2.1 methodological naturalism*

**Methodological Naturalism is a common occurrence in the academy both Christian and secular. Simply defined, it is a philosophy and understanding of the sciences, commerce, etc. which denies the reality of a deity. As opposed to Theistic realism which uses the reality of God as a key point in all aspects of life, methodological naturalism denies the actual in-working of God in the world. This shows itself in philosophies such as theistic evolution. It is a significant force because it represents a whole wave of Christian scholars who act and function professionally like atheists. The naturalistic worldview that they are embracing in their studies is in fact the same worldview that causes their colleagues to deny God.**

*2.2 inerrancy of Scripture vs. infallibility of Scripture*

**The inerrancy of Scripture describes the Bible's complete freedom from factual, theological, or any other type of error. As discussed in *Unapologetic Apologetics* error often has a varied definition depending on the circumstances and parties involved. The infallibility of Scripture describes not the freedom from error, but the inability to even have error in it. It is by this that we see that the Scripture is in fact the rule for truth and reality. Each of these terms are key in the battle over the validity of Scripture. It is important to hold both in tandem.**

*2.3 the cosmological argument*

**The (Kalaam) Cosmological argument proceeds as following: All things which began to exist have a cause. The universe began to exist. The universe had a cause. William Lane Craig then adds, "this cause is God." Of the arguments presented in class, this is one of the simplest for those we speak to to grasp. It has been presented in history in several ways long before Craig. It is an important foundational argument for the existence of God because it keeps the mind of the questioner in the physical realm rather than bringing them too far into abstractions.**

*2.4 the moral argument*

**The Moral argument for the existence of God could be presented as follows. Common codes of morality are generated from a common source. There is a common code of morality among all peoples. There must be a common source. This source is God. This argument as well is a practical help in evangelism. Definition of morality is an extremely difficult undertaking for philosophical naturalists, as such, this is a key argument for theism.**

*2.5 theistic realism*

**Theistic realism is a philosophy that has as its starting point the existence of God. It could be stated this way: if God exists, everything else must be affected by that information. This was put forth by Stephen Johnson and has made its way into other scholarship since then. This is an extremely important philosophy because it provides a philosophical antidote for both Philosophical and Methodological Naturalism.**

*2.6 human exceptionalism (how is humanity unique?)*

**This concept is a difficult one for naturalist assumptions. Human exceptionalism defines the great number of “privileges” the human species enjoys. These could be briefly described as superior intellect, specially adjusted physical characteristics etc. The supremacy of humans in these areas is difficult to define apart from a purposeful designer who intended to create a superior group of His creation.**

*2.7 miracle*

**Defined by C.S. Lewis, a miracle is the in-breaking of God into the natural order of things, for example, the creation of the food for the 5,000 by Jesus. No natural process would have spontaneously generated food at that specific spot; it required a special act of God. However, as soon as He brought the food into the world, it became subject to the rules of nature. Lewis describes it as nature receiving the miracle material. Miracles are a vital aspect of the Christian faith. They confirm God’s presence and interaction with His people. They also are the bedrock for most key theologies of the Bible: resurrection, ascension, Substitutionary atonement, etc.**

*2.8 metaphor vs. simile*

**A metaphor is a comparison. A simile is a comparison using “like” or “as”. Both are common elements in English prose and poetry.**

*2.9 the “blind watchmaker” thesis*

**As presented by Richard Dawkins, the “Blind Watchmaker” thesis proposes that nature is made up of things which have the appearance of being designed. Through natural processes like genetic mutation and natural selection of the fittest specimens, species move from simple to complex manifestations. As well along their path, they gain elements which seem to be designed but only seem so because they so well fit their environment. Dawkins hold that numerous other adaptations occurred, but only the most profitable is preserved. This is an important theory to recognize and refute because it holds the key to tearing down naturalism. If design is done by a designer, the naturalist must come to acknowledge the designer. If design can be explained as chance, then there is no God to battle.**

*2.10 Aristotle’s notion of truth*

**Truth was that which accorded with the “Forms.” In a somewhat mystical way, he described the “Forms” as pre-existent entities which we all experienced in a time before our spirits existed here on earth. Thus we know a circle is a circle because of its “circle-ness” which agrees with the forms we saw before. This notion is difficult to bring in to a Christian worldview which denies the pre-existence of the soul.**

**Answer the following questions [10 points each]:**

3. *You happen to meet Peter Fromm at Starbucks. He's spouting off that the Resurrection never happened. Realizing that he knows a lot of theology, how do you defend the Resurrection of Christ?*

**In defending the Resurrection, two key elements must be brought to bear. First and foremost, the theology of the resurrection must be seen, and secondly the historicity of the resurrection.**

**The theological necessity of the resurrection is key for any inquirer to understand. The biblical teaching on sin makes clear that the soul who sins will die, and the wages of sin is death (Rom 6:23). As such, anyone who dies can be said to have died because of his or her own sin. If this is the case, then a crucified Jesus who stays in the grave was somehow culpable for His own sin. This decimates the theology of the cross. The Bible also teaches that God's people are in need of a sacrifice for their sins. The whole of the Old Testament sacrificial system demonstrates this. But that same sacrificial system demonstrates the need for the sacrifice to be unblemished. If Jesus went to the cross for His own sin, died, buried, and stayed there, His credentials as the people's Messiah have just failed. Rather the Resurrection vindicates His sacrifice. The Resurrection shows that God in His justice has punished the sin of His people on Christ, who Himself was not deserving of punishment. Secondly the resurrection of Jesus is the hope of all Christians that one day resurrection will also come to us. 1 Corinthians 15 is a key chapter for both of these aspects. "If Christ is not raised, we are still in our sins." "If we have hope in Christ for this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied." Paul well understood the importance of the Resurrection.**

**A second aspect to see is the historical reliability of the Resurrection. The radical change in the disposition and actions of the disciples between the Friday afternoon and Sunday morning of Passion Week is a great evidence of this. The resurrected Jesus found His disciples sulking and mourning in Luke 24 because they believed all had failed when their messiah was crucified. This no doubt was a common sentiment among the disciples. Following the Resurrection and the coming of the Spirit, the disciples became bold witnesses for Christ, many of them unto death. Paul's 500 witnesses in 1 Cor. 15 bear this out as well. Jesus did not appear to only one or two people (which could be explained by hysteria or hallucination) rather He appeared to hundreds. Thus the Resurrection stands in light of these two evidences.**

4. *What is the core of the Christian faith? Distinguish the physical, theoretical, and regulative core. Give examples of each.*

**The Christian faith can be viewed as a worldview with three major component parts. These are known as the physical, theoretical, and regulative core. Each of these functions with the others as the central elements of Christian doctrine.**

**The physical core denotes the real-world elements of the Christian faith. These include elements such as the presence and life of Jesus Christ, His virgin birth, death, burial, and resurrection. To deny that these events existed in real-time is to deny the very foundations of the faith. The theoretical core denotes the doctrinal out-workings of these events. This includes doctrines such as the exclusivity of Christ, His Substitutionary atonement, the Trinity etc. Each of these doctrines find their roots in the Bible and are vital to Christian faith. Lastly, the regulative core defines both the source of authority within the faith as well as the responsibilities of the faithful. The first aspect includes the authority of scripture, the importance of truth and the church. The second aspect includes the code of morality that accompanies the Christian faith. Abstaining from drunkenness, sexual immorality, idolatry etc. could be said to be in the regulative core of Christian faith.**

5. *How does C. S. Lewis argue that naturalism undermines its own credibility? Evaluate his argument.*

**Lewis argues that naturalism, rightly followed, undermines its own credibility by destroying the source of any verifiable knowledge. The naturalist is forced to conclude that human beings are nothing more than a chance collection of atoms which have been arranged by a purposeless process. As such there is no source for certainty within naturalism. The harder the naturalist presses into his naturalism, the further he denies his ability to know or be certain. As argued by Lewis or elsewhere, the Darwinian process of natural selection can never produce beliefs intentionally based on truth. Natural selection only produces a series of beliefs based on the ultimate benefit of the ends which those beliefs produce. The example can be given of a man concerning a wild tiger in the jungle. If the man believes the tiger to be dangerous and runs, or if he believes the tiger to be playing a game with him and runs, the end result is the same. Natural selection and naturalistic processes cannot select for truth.**

**These arguments are daunting to naturalism. If the ultimate end of any philosophy is unconquerable skepticism, the philosophy is ultimately useless. Naturalism strikes at the God who is the creator of all truth and as such cuts itself off from him.**

*6. You are debating someone over the Internet who claims that intelligent design is really just a religious doctrine masquerading as science. How do you respond?*

**Ultimately all courses of study are begun with a worldview. Whether it is a study into the patterns of human behavior, or an attempt to understand the origins of life or the universe, each of these studies is begun with a worldview that ultimately governs the interpretation of the findings. My debate partner first is ignoring the fact that rejecting intelligent design is ultimately a religious doctrine masquerading as science. His bonds to philosophical naturalism have limited his thinking on the subject greatly. Both evolutionary biology and intelligent design function as historical rather than operational science. These fields are attempting to explain the presence of a situation after its occurrence. Much like a detective at a crime scene, these two fields gather evidence, make observations on the evidence, and create conclusions accordingly. The difference between the two fields is that evolutionary biology or atheistic cosmology has begun the investigation with a suspect who is immune from the investigation: God. The point of departure need not come in the evidence examined, but in the conclusions which are on the table. Atheistic biology is rife with exceedingly pained explanations to attribute design to a natural force. Intelligent design simply accepts the rational implication of apparent design: a designer. Using reasoning that is sound in every other area of life, it implicates a designer as the cause for design. This is not a religious move, it is a rational and scientific move.**

*7. A middle-aged man would like to attend the church at which you are a minister, but no longer regards himself as a Christian. He claims he was traumatized as a child when the threat of hell was used to terrify him into religious compliance. What do you say to him? Is apologetics relevant? Is it sufficient?*

**This is a difficult situation to address without more information. It would seem like one of the first courses of action would be to get a better understanding of that childhood trauma and more importantly to understand where this man stands at this time. Is his rejection of Christianity solely because of a bad experience? Is it a guise to hide a sin area? Many more questions could be raised. Ultimately the man would need to understand and accept the reality of hell as an adult. This may be best accomplished by spending time with him in personal Bible study and counseling.**

**Apologetics is relevant in the sense that it serves to answer questions raised by the inquirer. As the man brings up the problem of evil in the church, for example, I would want to have an answer prepared for him to explain why there are some in the church who do not follow Christ as He calls us to. Or if the man began to question God's justice if "good people" were going to hell, it would be important to have an answer to that objection. In this way, apologetics, defined as answering questions with a reasonable, biblical answer, is certainly a valuable and relevant tool. It may be sufficient for answering questions but of course is not ultimately sufficient for this man's conversion. Our best presentations, unaided by the work of the Spirit, will not bring about a man's salvation. Nevertheless, the Spirit works through us in the ways He pleases. This encounter may be one of many that ultimately the Spirit uses to this man's conversion.**



8. *The Pew Foundation has awarded you \$10 billion dollars to bring American society back to Christ by transforming the American university system. What would be your overall strategy for redressing American higher education? What concrete steps would you take? Would you start a new Christian university? Would you try to rekindle Charles Malik's "Institute"? With all that money in the bank, how, specifically, would you proceed? How would you use the money?*

**I would like to begin this essay by stating clearly, money will never bring anyone to Christ. The thoughts or insights applied, considering this a real-world situation, will never in and of themselves bring about repentance and faith in Christ. That said, God uses means to present the Gospel to people and to break down walls both spiritually and physically which separate men from the Gospel message.**

**An overhaul of the American academy is an undertaking fit for a multi-pronged attack. A first step to take would be to access those professing believers already involved in the university system. Perhaps an organization could be established (or one already attempting this could be resourced) to contact and unify those already in the academy. These teachers could begin to share ideas for being a Gospel witness in the workplace, for expanding fields of research to include humanitarian efforts etc. A second step would be to create strong organizations within the students with a focus on living outspoken Christian lives, as well as excelling academically. Both of these types of organizations require funding, both start-up and sustenance. Jobs would need to be created for coordinators, web and programming developers, vision directors etc. These organizations, designed to tap the pre-existing resources would form the first phase of the plan.**

**The second major phase would be to equip, train, and motivate those men and women already in the university, both students and teachers, to begin to share the Gospel message with their peers. This would require funding for printed and digital material such as tracts, booklets, DVD's etc. This may also require speakers to train students and teachers in common evangelism methods (Way of the Master, Evangelism Explosion etc.) as well as more specialized apologetic training for the academy (intelligent design, the flaws of naturalism etc.).**

**The third major phase would be to evaluate needs in the current academy system and potentially endow certain departments or colleges or to establish new ones in key areas. These may be areas of study that simply do not have a Christian presence or ones in which Christian students are unwelcome. Each of these options certainly requires a great deal of capitol.**

**A last phase would be to create and spread materials, books, pamphlets, etc. into local churches demonstrating God's call for His people to use their gifting in research, study, and the academy. These materials could point students to key fields of study in need of a Christian presence. This phase also would contain college-choice counseling for students looking to continue their studies after high school. This would require funding again for materials as well as personnel to speak to students on a one-to-one and group basis at a local church.**

**In total this plan, if aided by the work of the Spirit, should begin a movement towards renewing the mind in the American academy. The timeline here may be as short as 10-15 years or as long as 75-100 years. An aspect which is difficult to predict is the amount of push-back from college administration and existing faculty/students. Nevertheless, this plan attempts to address both the strengthening of existing warriors for the mind, as well as the creation of new ones.**