



Ready Defense: An Introduction to Christian Apologetics (D3)

Fall 2026 (Sept 10-Nov 19) Thursdays 2:30-5:00pm

Location: Grant Street Church of Christ, 210 E Grant St, Lebanon, OR 97355

Instructor: Wes Hanson

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I. Course Description: Ready Defense is a 10-week course intended to introduce students to practical definitions, purposes, and principles for effective Christian apologetics, developing the skills to articulate well-reasoned arguments for Christianity and well-reasoned responses to some common arguments against Christianity. From Gregory Koukl's book, *Tactics*, we will learn a practical methodology for setting a conversational tone that encourages others to actively consider the reasonableness of belief in Christianity, while gently exposing the flaws in other systems of thought. Importantly, as ambassadors for Christ, we will learn the proper attitude and demeanor of disciples who are prepared to make a defense for hope in Jesus with full reverence toward Him and appropriate respect toward others (1 Pet 3:15).

II. Course Objectives:

- Equip students with proper attitudes for engaging in apologetic conversations.
- Equip students with practical methodologies and skills for defending the faith of Jesus Christ in a civil and courteous manner.
- Equip students with general knowledge to build and articulate a well-reasoned case for belief in Christianity.
- Equip students with general knowledge of how to address common arguments and objections to Christianity.
- Encourage students to have greater confidence & competence for defending their faith in Jesus Christ.
- Inspire students to have a deeper affection for Christ in view of the reasonableness of the Christian faith.
- Inspire students to have a deeper love for others that manifests in gracious and respectful dialogue with others about issues of great importance.

III. Course Texts:

A. Required:

- Koukl, Gregory. *Tactics (Updated and Expanded): A Gameplan for Discussing Your Christian Convictions*. Zondervan, 2019. ISBN: 978-0-310-10146-8.
- Print copy of the Bible in a standard translation

B. Referenced/Recommended for Further Study:

- Anderson, James N. *What's Your Worldview: An Interactive Approach to Life's Big Questions*. Crossway, 2014. ISBN: 978-1-4335-3892-6.
- Frankowski, Nathan. *Expelled: No Intelligence Allowed [Film]*. Premise Media Corporation, 2008. ASIN: B003LMSSVC.
- Garner, Alan. *Con conversationally Speaking: Tested New Ways to Increase Your Personal and Social Effectiveness*. McGraw Hill, 1997. ISBN-10: 9781565656291.
- McDowell, Josh. *The Resurrection Factor: Compelling Evidence Which Proves the Resurrection of Jesus Christ Beyond Reasonable Doubt*. Authentic Media, 2005. ISBN: 978-1850786405.
- Mouw, Richard J. *Uncommon Decency (Revised and Expanded): Christian Civility in an Uncivilized World*. Intervarsity, 2010. ISBN: 978-0830833092.
- Newman, Randy. *Corner Conversations: Engaging Dialogues About God and Life*. Kregel, 2006. ISBN: 0-8254-3323-1.
- Newman, Randy. *Questioning Evangelism: Engaging People's Hearts the Way Jesus Did*. Kregel, 2004. ISBN: 0-8254-3324-x.

- Pathak, Jay & Dave Runyon. *The Art of Neighboring: Building Genuine Relationships Right Outside Your Door*. Baker Books, 2012. ISBN: 080101459X.
- Pearcey, Nancy. *Love Thy Body: Answering Hard Questions about Life and Sexuality*. Baker Books, 2018. ISBN: 978-0-8010-7572-8.
- Stedman, Rick. *31 Surprising Reasons to Believe in God: How Superheroes, Art, Environmentalism, and Science Point Toward Faith*. Harvest House, 2017. ISBN: 978-0-7369-6983-3.
- Strobel, Lee. *The Case for Christ: A Journalist's Personal Investigation of the Evidence for Jesus*. Zondervan, 1998. ISBN: 0-310-20930-7.
- Wallace, J. Warner. *Cold-Case Christianity: A Homicide Detective Investigates the Claims of the Gospels*. David C. Cook, Distribution. ISBN: 978-1-4347-0469-6
- Wharton, Edward C. *The Case for Historic Christianity*. Sunset International Bible Institute, 2000. ISBN: 0972161503
- Wilson, Bill. *The Best of Josh McDowell: A Ready Defense*. Thomas Nelson Publishers. ISBN: 0-8407-4419-6

IV. Course Requirements

A. Project Antioch Students: Attendance & Participation will Be Monitored. Students are expected to engage in class discussions making relevant and appropriate comments, listen attentively to the instructor and other discussion participants and take notes. Weekly reading assignments should be completed in advance of class meeting time.

B. ACSI Continuing Education Units (CEU). The Northwest School of Discipleship is an approved ACSI Continuing Education Unit provider. Participation in the entire course will result in 3 CEUs. The instructor will keep a record of attendance and provide that information to the NWSD director to process CEUs. Students can only miss one class session and still receive the full number of CEUs. Please tell the instructor on the first night of class that you are taking the class for CEU credit.

V. Course Outline

Date	Topic	Tactics Reading:	Scripture Reading:
Sep 10	Session 1: Definitions & Purposes of Apologetics; Biblical Bases for Apologetics		
Sep 17	Session 2: Attitudes & Manner in Apologetics (Making Friends vs. Making Enemies); Maintaining Civil Dialogue; Finding Common Ground	Ch. 1-2	Acts 17 & 26
Sep 24	Session 3: The Power of Good Questions; Introducing the "The Columbo Tactic" Methodology (Steps 1 & 2)	Ch. 3-5	Luke 5:17-26; 20:1-8
Oct 1	Session 4: "The Columbo Tactic" Methodology (Step 3); 2 Reliable Rescues	Ch. 6-7	Luke 10:25-37
Oct 8	Session 5: Tactical Questioning; More Columbo Tactics; Practical Tips & Tricks	Ch. 8-9	Luke 7:36-50; John 8:1-11
Oct 15	NO CLASS		
Oct 22	Session 6: Tactical Listening- Listening to Determine Worldview, Bias, Emotional Objections, Flawed Logic, etc.	Ch. 10-11	Matthew 19:16-30; 22:23-33
Oct 29	Session 7: Readying Defense of the Uniqueness of the Historical Case for Christian Belief	Ch. 12-13	Luke 1:1-4; 1 Corinthians 15:3-8
Nov 5	Session 8: Readying Defense of the Existence of God (Science, Reason, Morality, Beauty, Experience)	Ch. 14-15	Psalms 8; 19; Romans 1:18-20
Nov 12	Session 9: Readying Defense Against Objections & Accusations; The Problem of Human Suffering; Cultural Biases; Pluralism	Ch. 16-17	Acts 14:8-22; 19:21-41
Nov 19	Session 10: Articulating Your Personal Case for Reasonable Belief in Christianity	18-19	Romans 1:18-2:15