



**Dealing with Bible Difficulties PHIL6320/THEO6320**  
**New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary**  
**Division of Theological and Historical Studies**  
**Defend the Faith Conference 2023**

**PROFESSOR OF RECORD: GARY HABERMAS**  
Visiting Professor of Christian Apologetics  
New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary

**FOR COURSE INFORMATION: ROBERT B. STEWART**  
Professor of Philosophy and Theology  
Office: Dodd 112  
Phone: 504-282-4455 x3245  
Email: [rstewart@nobts.edu](mailto:rstewart@nobts.edu)

### **Mission Statement**

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and Leavell College prepare servants to walk with Christ, proclaim His truth, and fulfill His mission.

### **Course Description**

This course surveys the nature of Scripture, basic Christian convictions concerning the doctrine of Scripture, and the sorts of claims that are frequently brought against the reliability of the Bible, particularly to its textual and historical reliability. Additionally, attention will be given to common claims that there are contradictions in the Bible and, when appropriate, to issues concerning the development of the canon of Scripture.

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

1. Students will be introduced to the basic issues related to the reliability of the Bible by reading the primary texts and assigned readings.
2. Students will be introduced to the basic issues related to the reliability of the Bible by attending relevant breakout sessions at the Defend 2023 Apologetics Conference and summarizing and critiquing those sessions in writing.
3. Students will investigate the basic issues related to the reliability of the Bible through writing book reviews.
4. Students will demonstrate an understanding of how to recognize and respond to a challenge to biblical reliability by writing a research paper on a subject related to the course.

### Required Textbooks

Blomberg, Craig L. *The Historical Reliability of the New Testament: The Challenge to Evangelical Christian Beliefs*. B & H Studies in Christian Apologetics. Nashville: B & H Academic, 2016.

Cowan, Steven B. and Terry L. Wilder, *In Defense of the Bible: A Comprehensive Apologetic for the Authority of Scripture*. Nashville: B & H Academic, 2013.

Stewart, Robert B. *The Reliability of the New Testament: Bart D. Ehrman and Daniel B. Wallace in Dialogue*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2011.

### Optional Textbooks

Carson, D. A. *The Enduring Authority of the Christian Scriptures*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016.

Cullmann, Oscar, Gary Habermas and Benjamin Charles Shaw. *The Earliest Christian Confessions*. Translated by J. K. S. Reid. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2018.

Merrick, J. and Stephen M. Garrett. *Five Views on Biblical Inerrancy*. Counterpoint: Bible and Theology. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013.

Morrow, Jonathan. *Questioning the Bible: 11 Major Challenges to the Bible's Authority*. Chicago: Moody, 2014.

Jones, Timothy Paul. *Misquoting Truth: A Guide to the Fallacies of Bart Ehrman's "Misquoting Jesus."* Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2007.

### Course Requirements

**1. Conference Attendance.** Students will attend ALL of the Defend 2023 Apologetics Conference at the NOBTS main campus, January 2-6, 2023. Students not attending all of the conference sessions will have additional assignments.

**2. Required Reading.** Students are required to read all of the required textbooks. Students are not required to review these books, nor may they review any of the required books in lieu of one of the books listed for book reviews. **Students must affirm on Canvas that they have done this.**

**3. Book Reviews.** Each student is required to review 2 of the books in the bibliography. **Students may not duplicate book reviews from any other course for this course.** Students who wish to substitute another book in place of one of the books in the bibliography must get the professor's permission in an email to do so.

Reviews should include: (1) some professional biographical data concerning the author; (2) a summary of the book; (3) an assessment of the author's aim or purpose and of the degree of its fulfillment; and (4) a critical evaluation of the book. All grammar and citations in the reviews should follow Turabian form. Reviews should be 5-7 double-spaced pages (which won't be difficult if students include all of the above criteria). **Book Reviews are due 7 weeks after the final day of the Defend 2023 Apologetics Conference (February 24, 2023).**

**4. Research Paper.** Each student is required to submit a research paper on a topic related to an issue related to the reliability and authority of the Bible. The paper should be not less than 3,000 words nor more than 3,500 words in length (double spaced, Times New Roman 12 point font). Papers must adhere to the Turabian style guide. Students may NOT submit the same paper for this course and another NOBTS course. **Research papers are due 12 weeks after the final day of the *Defend 2023 Apologetics Conference (March 31, 2023).***

**5. Session Summaries.** Write one-page, single-spaced summaries of 12 different breakout sessions from the *Defend 2023* Christian Apologetics Conference. Students taking more than one *Defend 2023* course for NOBTS credit may not use any session summaries that they use for another course. Summaries should be submitted via Canvas. **Summaries are due 15 weeks after the conclusion of the *Defend 2023 Apologetics Conference (April 14, 2023).***

Research papers should be:

- **Well-Rounded:** The bibliography should contain *at least* 12 non-electronic sources.
- **Biblical:** The researcher should demonstrate the use of biblical texts and hermeneutical skill in his or her evaluation of the issue.
- **Organization:** The organization and structure of the paper should grow out of the research and should be the best possible means for explicating the topic.
- **Implications:** The researcher should be able to demonstrate the “so what” of their research topic as far as it pertains to evangelical faith, practice, and evangelism.
- **Form and style:** Careful attention should be given to all matters of subdivisions, paragraphing, quoted matter, footnotes, punctuation, capitalization, grammar, spelling, sentence structure, word usage, bibliography, etc. Papers should be double-spaced, in Turabian format, in Times New Roman 12 pt. font, and should contain a bibliography and an NOBTS title page.
- **Critical evaluation:** Critical evaluation—not just superficial treatment of the sources—and accurate exposition of the topic should characterize your paper. It goes without saying that “critical evaluation” requires the use of proper logic.

**Papers due 12 weeks after the last day of the Defend the Faith Apologetics Conference (March 31, 2023).**

Here is a rough guide to paper grades.

**A Paper:** Demonstrates a *superior* grasp of ideas, arguments, or theories it discusses, and presents very good, clear, and thoughtful arguments, with very few, if any, significant grammatical and/or form and style problems.

**B Paper:** Demonstrates a *good* grasp of ideas, arguments, or theories it discusses, presents an argument that exhibits good reasoning, with minimal significant grammatical and/or form and style problems.

**C Paper:** Demonstrates an adequate though perhaps limited understanding of ideas, arguments, or theories it discusses, mixed with a significant number of incorrect claims, presents weak arguments, contains significant grammatical or structural problems.

**D Paper:** Demonstrates significant misunderstandings of factual matters, uses poor logic or fallacious reasoning (if any) to argue points (e.g., merely makes a series of unconnected assertions), fails significantly with respect to technical specifications.

**F Paper:** Failure to submit a paper, a paper that commits plagiarism, or a paper that presents no argumentation.

**Grades** will be assigned on the basis of the NOBTS grading scale: 93-100, A; 85-92, B; 77-84, C; 70-76, D; 0-69, F.

### Evaluation of Grade

The student's grade will be computed as follows:

Conference Attendance	10%
Required Reading	10%
Book Reviews	20%
Research Paper	30%
<u>Session Summaries</u>	<u>30%</u>
Final Grade	100%

### Technical Assistance

For assistance regarding technology, consult ITC (504-816-8180) or the following websites:

1. [www.NOBTS.edu/itc/](http://www.NOBTS.edu/itc/)- Email for general technical questions/support requests.
2. [Selfserve@nobts.edu](mailto:Selfserve@nobts.edu)- Email technical questions/support requests with the [Selfserve.nobts.edu](http://Selfserve.nobts.edu) or [My.nobts.edu](http://My.nobts.edu) site (Access to online registration, financial account, online transcript, Faculty portal, etc.)
3. [Canvas@nobts.edu](http://Canvas@nobts.edu) Click on the “Help” button for technical questions/support requests regarding the NOBTS Canvas System. You can also email questions to [Canvas.nobts.edu](http://Canvas.nobts.edu) / [nobts.instructure.com](http://nobts.instructure.com).
4. [Bluejeanshelpdesk@nobts.edu](mailto:Bluejeanshelpdesk@nobts.edu) - Email technical questions/support requests with Bluejeans and NOBTS Bluejeans classrooms (On and Off-Campus).
5. [TelephoneHelpDesk@nobts.edu](mailto:TelephoneHelpDesk@nobts.edu)- Email technical questions/support requests with the NOBTS Nextiva Phone system.

[504.816.8180](tel:504.816.8180) - Call for any technical questions/support requests. (Currently available Mon-Thurs 7:00am-9:00pm & Fri 7:00-7:00pm Central Time

### Help for Writing Papers at “The Write Stuff”

NOBTS maintains a Writing Center designed to improve English writing at the graduate level. Students can receive writing guides, tips, and valuable information to help in becoming a better writer.

### Plagiarism on Written Assignments

NOBTS has a no tolerance policy for plagiarism. Plagiarism in certain cases may result in expulsion from the seminary. See the NOBTS Student Handbook for definition, penalties, and policies associated with plagiarism.

### Selected Bibliography

- Blomberg, Craig L. *The Historical Reliability of the New Testament: The Challenge to Evangelical Christian Beliefs*. B & H Studies in Christian Apologetics. Nashville: B & H Academic, 2016.
- Carson, D. A. *The Enduring Authority of the Christian Scriptures*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016.
- Cowan, Steven B. and Terry L. Wilder. *In Defense of the Bible: A Comprehensive Apologetic for the Authority of Scripture*. Nashville: B & H Academic, 2013.
- Cullmann, Oscar, Gary Habermas and Benjamin Charles Shaw. *The Earliest Christian Confessions*. Translated by J. K. S. Reid. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2018.
- Dunn, James D. G. *Unity and Diversity in the New Testament: An Inquiry into the Character of Earliest Christianity*. London: SCM Press, 2006.
- Ehrman, Bart D., Craig A. Evans, and Robert B. Stewart. *Can We Trust the Bible on the Historical Jesus?* Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2020.
- Ehrman, Bart D. *Forged: Writing in the Name of God—Why the Bible’s Authors Are Not Who We Think They Are*. San Francisco: HarperCollins, 2011.
- Ehrman, Bart D. *Lost Christianities: The Battles for Scripture and the Faiths We Never Knew*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2003.
- Ellis, E. Earle. *The Making of the New Testament Documents*. Boston and Leiden: Brill, 1999.
- Jones, Timothy Paul. *Misquoting Truth: A Guide to the Fallacies of Bart Ehrman's “Misquoting Jesus.”* Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2007.
- Lindsell, Harold. *The Battle for the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976.
- Lindsell, Harold. *The Bible in the Balance: A Further Look at the Battle for the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979.
- Merrick, J. and Stephen M. Garrett. *Five Views on Biblical Inerrancy*. Counterpoint: Bible and Theology. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013.
- Morrow, Jonathan. *Questioning the Bible: 11 Major Challenges to the Bible's Authority*. Chicago: Moody, 2014.
- Rogers, Jack Bartlett and Donald K. McKim. *The Authority and Interpretation of the Bible: An Historical Approach*. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1979.
- Stewart, Robert B. *The Reliability of the New Testament: Bart D. Ehrman and Daniel B. Wallace in Dialogue*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2011.

- Vanderkam, James C. *From Revelation to Canon: Studies in the Hebrew Bible and Second Temple Literature*. Boston and Leiden: Brill, 2003.
- Vanhoozer, Kevin J. *Biblical Authority after Babel: Retrieving the Solas in the Spirit of Mere Protestant Christianity*. Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2016.
- Warfield, Benjamin Breckinridge. *Inspiration and Authority of the Bible*. Second Edition. Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1980.
- Woodbridge, John D. *Biblical Authority: A Critique of the Rogers/McKim Proposal*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1982.