

Corporate Reading through The Van Til Apologetic by Greg Bahnsen

Schedule

Date	Chapter	Pages & Sections	Questions
Wednesday 12 th September 8.30pm	1 – Introduction to Van Til Apologetic Pages 1-26	1.1 – Ultimate Commitment 1.2 – Epistemological Self- consciousness 1.3 – The Impossibility of the contrary 1.4 – <i>Brief Biography of Van Til</i>	1.1a Presuppositional Apologetics is not popular nor mainstream among Christians. Why might this be? 1.1b How do the biblical texts, referenced by Greg Bahnsen (GB), confirm this approach? 1.2a Is scholarship religious? 1.2b What was Van Til’s (VT) distinctive genius in the apologetic endeavour? How was it revolutionary? 1.3a What, according to VT, is the ONLY foundation of reasoning? Why is ‘soul salvation’ such a reductionist notion biblically? What else, in particular, needs saving? Can we un-pack: (i) ...impossibility of contrary... (ii) intellectual autonomy (iii) preconditions for intelligibility?
Wednesday 3 rd October	2 – Task of Apologetics Pages 27-87	2.1 – Nature & Necessity 2.2 – Inter-relationships of related disciplines 2.3 – The Aim of apologetics	2.1a According to VT, apologetics involves a ‘clash of worldviews’. Why is this preferable to piece-meal discussion of isolated facts? 2.1b Is argumentation necessarily contentious? 2.2a What caution does Bahnsen (& VT) draw our attention to on p46? What’s the danger? 2.2b Van Til commends a ‘holistic’ approach to evangelism, philosophy, theology & apologetics. What subtle but serious flaws marked Warfield & Dooyeweerd & Schaeffer’s teachings in relation to apologetics? 2.3 Many academic theologians decry Van Til’s presuppositionalism as ‘Fideism’. Why is this not so?
Wednesday 17 th October	3 - Simple Summary & Illustration Pages 88-143	3.1 – Conflict between Final Authorities 3.2 – Implicit Clash of Worldviews 3.3 – Refutation of Unbeliever’s Presuppositions 3.4 – An example of Presuppositionalism <i>Van Til’s Why I Believe in God.</i>	3.1a What was the point of Bahnsen’s illustration re the Statue of Eros in London? 3.1b May we ‘address the epistemological question apart from the ontological question’ as Dr Singer suggests? If not, why not? [p96] 3.1c What is ‘monism’? Why is it pertinent to this discussion? 3.2 How does St Paul (Rom 1:25) summarily teach that there are essentially just TWO warring worldviews out there? Briefly unpack each. 3.3a How is ‘monism’ incompatible with proper reasoning? [p113] 3.3b Which sort of reasoning (believer’s or unbeliever’s) involves the exercise of FAITH? 3.4 Why is Ps 36:9 the quintessential proof text of VT’s distinctive apologetic?

Wednesday 31 st October	4a – Epistemology I Pages 144-193	4.1 – Epistemological Disagreement 4.2 – Knowing as having Belief, Truth & Evidence 4.3 – The Inescapable Knowledge of God	4.1 Bahnsen tells us, ‘a person’s epistemological behaviour and commitments are ethical in character’. Give an example. 4.2a Differentiate BRIEFLY between belief, knowledge and truth 4.2b What is the Christian conception of ‘truth’? 4.2c Is it possible to know ANY fact truly apart from God? Explain! 4.3a Why MUST it be the case that the ‘unbeliever’ actually does believe in God? 4.3b What KIND of knowledge of God does the ‘unbeliever’ possess? 4.3c What are the some of the practical implications of this?
Wednesday 14 th November	4b – Epistemology II Pages 194-260	4.4 – The Redemptive, Self-attesting Revelation of God in Scripture 4.5 – Thinking God’s Thoughts after Him	4.4a What’s the correct relationship between nature & Scripture? (p195) 4.4b What are some of the symptoms of noetic sin? 4.4c By what authority do we accept Biblical authority? How can we know this? 4.4d Was divine revelation needed before Adam fell? 4.4e The Reformers argued for the ‘necessity’ of Scripture. Why? 4.4f What ‘life & death struggle’ does VT reference on p207? 4.4g What’s wrong with the ID struggle? 4.5a
Wednesday 28 th November			