Seminar on Christian Worldview
---An Introduction and Defense of Biblical Christianity

General Outline

A. Philosophical and Scientific Apologetics
Group 1: Epistemology and the Existence of God
Group 2: The Truth of Truth and the Theory of Creation
Group 3: The Science of Science and the Theory of Evolution

B. Religious and Theological Apologetics
Group 4: The Spectrum of Beliefs: Comparative Religions and Philosophies
Group 5: The Attributes of God

C. Biblical and Historical Apologetics
Group 6: Old Testament History and Chronology
Group 7: Intertestamental and New Testament History and Chronology
Group 8: Biblical End-time Expectations

D. Cultural and Moral Apologetics
Group 9: World Culture and Biblical Truth
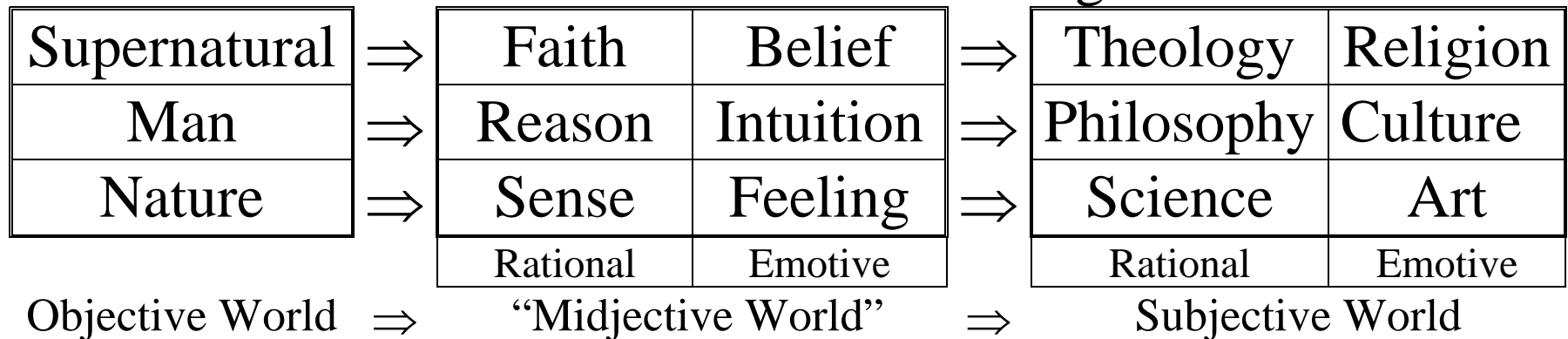Group 10: Western Culture and Biblical Truth

Fundamentals of Philosophy

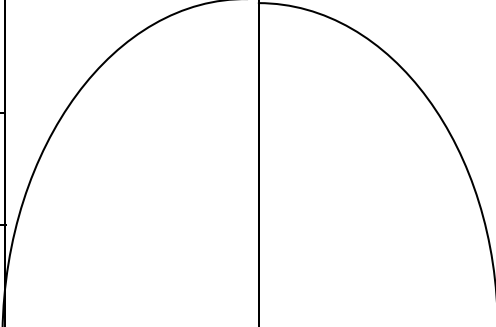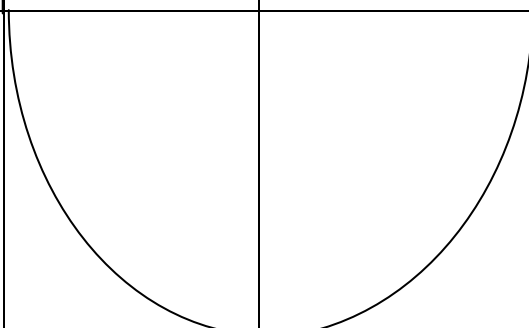| The Four Branches of Philosophy	The Four Fundamental Questions of Philosophy	The Four Fundamental Definitions of Philosophy	The Two Products of Philosophy
1. Epistemology	How do I know?	What is true?	World View
2. Metaphysics	What is there?	What is real?	
3. Ethics	What should I do?	What is good?	Philosophy of Life
4. Categorical Philosophy	Why do I do this?	What is right?	

Epistemology
----the Process of Knowing

Supernatural	$\Rightarrow$	Faith	Belief	$\Rightarrow$	Theology	Religion
Man	$\Rightarrow$	Reason	Intuition	$\Rightarrow$	Philosophy	Culture
Nature	$\Rightarrow$	Sense	Feeling	$\Rightarrow$	Science	Art
		Rational	Emotive		Rational	Emotive

Objective World $\Rightarrow$ "Midjective World" $\Rightarrow$ Subjective World
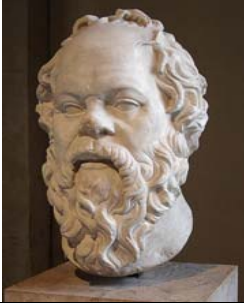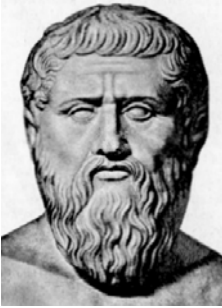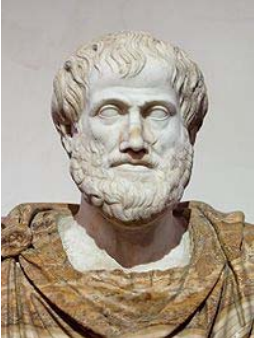
Truth =
The Accurate Rational Reflection of the Objective World in the Subjective World
Sincerity =
The *Genuine Emotional Response* to the Objective World in the Subjective World

The Wave Pattern of Western Philosophy

From		Classical	Medieval	Modern	Postmodern	To	
Faith	In Revelation			Descartes Hume Kant Hegel Marx Darwin Nietzsche Sartre	Derrida Foucault	Religion	Meta-physics
	In Tradition						
Reason	By Conviction					Philosophy	
	For Conviction	Socrates Plato Aristotle (Plotinus)	Augustine Aquinas William of Occam				Epistemology
Sense	From External					Science	
	From Internal						
Means of Knowledge		Based on Reason; seeking for Faith	Based on Faith; seeking for Reason	Based on Reason; seeking for Sense	Based on Sense; seeking for Reason	Ends of Knowledge	
		Metaphysics First		Epistemology First			
		Nowhere to Metaphysics	Metaphysics to Epistemology	Epistemology to Metaphysics	Epistemology to nowhere		

Portraits of the Most Influential Philosophers

	Socrates (c. 469–399 BC): He admits that he doesn't know. That made him able to ask questions. He always finds out the presupposition of the person who debates him, and reason from there to absurdity. He was killed by the Athenians for poisoning the mind of youths.
	Plato (427–347 BC): Socrates' Student, founder of the Academy He believes the existence of a world of the universals beyond the visible and temporary particulars. He questioned the moral of the Greek gods, and speculated the existence of one absolute good being—God. He hoped for a world ruled by a righteous philosopher-king—Messiah.
	Aristotle (384–322 BC): Plato's Student, founder of Lyceum He believed that universals can only exist within the particulars as their essence. He formed logic, science, and metaphysics, and heavily influenced Islamic and later medieval philosophy. His geocentric cosmology was adopted by medieval church, and was incorrectly portrayed as a symbol of religion impeding science.
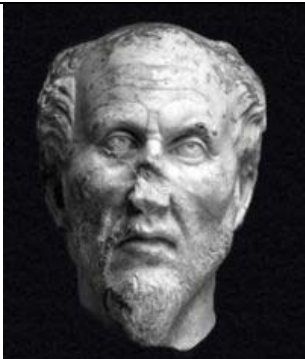
	Plotinus (c. AD 204–270): founder of Neo-Platonism He believes the existence of the absolute spiritual being "the One." All things are emanations of the One. The further from the One, the lower and less good things are. He invented Monism (Western Pantheism), but he agreed with the Gnostic (Dualism), that material beings are evil and spiritual beings good.
	Augustine, bishop of Hippo (354 –430) He was a fleshly pagan, dualist Manichean, and monist Neo-Platonist, before his conversion to Christianity. He formed biblical Trinitarianism and soteriology, and the concepts of linear time, just wars, the City of God, and Amillennialism.
	Anselm of Canterbury (c. 1033 –1109): founder of Scholasticism He was the archbishop of Canterbury, who won independence of the English church from lay investiture by the English crown. He was the designer of the Ontological Argument for the existence of God. Anselm and the Scholasticism reached the highest point of Platonic Christian philosophy. The age of scholasticism is the real age of reason, while the Enlightenment is the age of passion.

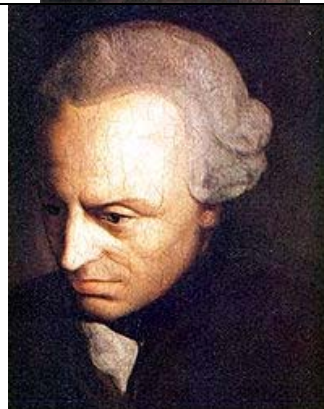|	
	Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274): founder of Thomism He responded to Aristotelian Islamic philosophy by turning Christian philosophy from Platonic to Aristotelian. He believed that man can use reason and experience to know God, while faith in divine revelation completes the knowledge. He opened the door to rationalism and empiricism, thus the modern age of science. He designed a series of arguments for the existence of God.
	William of Occam: (1288-1348): founder of Nominalism or Conceptualism He denied the existence of metaphysical universals, and proposed the reduction of ontology, with the so called Occam's Razor. He believes that the universals are just names (thus "Nominalism") or only concepts in human mind (thus "Conceptualism").
	Rene Descartes (1596-1650): major proponent of Rationalism A devout Catholic, he believed that he cane prove everything, from the existence of God, by logical reasoning, starting from the fact that he exists (the famous "I think, therefore I am"). He believes experience result in subjective knowledge, which is under doubt; only reason result in true knowledge.

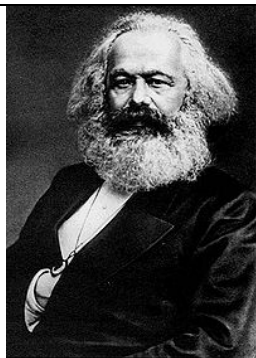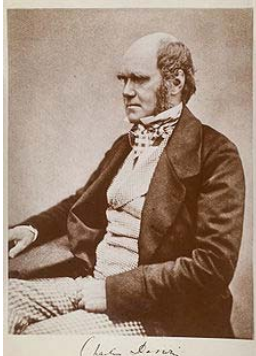|	
	John Locke (1632 –1704): major proponent of Empiricism He was established as a great political philosopher of all times, but his legacy also incluides espistemology. He believes that human mind is a blank card written by experience, which is the first and primary way of knowledge. This theory has been debunked by modern Christian philosophers like Alvin Plantinga, who believes that preexisting form in mind is necessary for categorizing.
	David Hume (1771-1776): major proponent of Empiricism He was established as a historian of England during his time, but his lasting influence is in epistemology. He was hostile to religion. He questioned the validity of induction, uniformity, causation and the argument of design, and denied the existence of any miracles.
	Immanuel Kant (1724-1804): founder of Kantianism He attempted to reconcile empiricism and rationalism by basing metaphysics upon epistemology. Since there is a gap between the Phenomena and Noumena, human knowledge is really limited on metaphysics. He proposed to replace the Ontological Argument for the existence of God with the Moral Argument; and ethics based on duty (Deontology).

	Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831): founder of Dialectic Idealism He believed in the existence of an all inclusive Geist (Spirit); thus he is a Monist (Western Pantheist). He believes that all reality is the historical exhibition of the universal Idea, thus the name Idealism. He believes that the Idea interacts in the pattern of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis, thus the name Dialecticism.
	Karl Marx (1818-1883): founder of Marxism He believes that the Hegelian idealism should be turned on its head, with material as the foundational existence. He believes in a universal law of history going toward Communism. Though atheistic, he is in fact a monist (western pantheist).
	Charles Darwin (1809-1882): founder of Darwinism He composed a theory of evolution for biological species for the preservation of the superior race (whites). The theory provides an apparent scientific foundation for Communism and Secular Humanism.

	Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche (1844 – 1900): founder of the "God-is-dead theology" Believing that God is dead, he called for the appearance of a superman. This was the foundation of Nazism.
	Bertrand Arthur William Russell (1872 –1970): Founder of Analytical Philosophy He is a mathematician and philosopher. His work with Alfred Whitehead "Principia Mathematica" tried to find a consistent and complete logical system. But Gödel's incompleteness theorems, proved by Kurt Gödel in 1931, proved that for any consistent logical system, there must be something that it cannot prove. This ended the ideal of rationalism.

	Jean-Paul Sartre (1905 – 1980): major proponent of Existentialism Believing that man has no meaning in life except his existence, he called for activism. This is the foundation of all leftist movements.
	Jacque Derrida (1930–2004): Linguistic Deconstructionism Believing that language cannot accurately carry meaning, he proposed postmodernism: questioning the existence of objective true knowledge.
	Michel Foucault (1926-1984): Moral Deconstructionism Being a homosexual, he believes all men can choose a lifestyle and moral standard.

Arguments for the Existence of God

(1) The Argument from Creation (Cosmological Argument)
Premise 1: Everything with a beginning seems to have a creator.
Premise 2: The universe seems to have a beginning.
Conclusion: The universe should have a creator, which is God.

(2) The Argument from Design (Teleological Argument)
Premise 1: Everything with order seems to have a designer.
Premise 2: The universe has order.
Conclusion: The universe should have a designer, which is God.

(3) The Argument from Morality (Axiological Argument)
Premise 1: Moral beings seem come from moral beings.
Premise 2: Man is a moral being.
Conclusion: Man should come from a moral being, which is God.

Arguments for the Existence of God

(4) The Argument from Existence (Ontological Argument)

(A) Strong Form
Premise 1: Man can think of a concept of infinity and perfection.
Premise 2: Existence is a part of perfection.
Conclusion: There must be an infinite and perfect being, which is God.

(B) Weak Form
Premise 1: Creation cannot be greater than the creator.
Premise 2: By definition, the universe is a creation and God is the creator.
Conclusion: If God exists,
 (1) his power must be greater than the total energy of the universe;
 (2) his wisdom must be greater than all the laws of universe; and
 (3) his moral must be higher than the highest moral in the universe.

The Epistemological Worlds of Emmanuel Kant

Absolute Being	Noumena	Phenomena	Knowledge about the Absolute Being
Relative Being			Knowledge about the Relative Being
Objective World		Subjective World	

Emmanuel Kant divides the Subjective World and Objective the World absolutely, as he divides the Phenomena from the Noumena. Thus the Ontological Argument can only prove that God exists in the Subjective World, not the Objective World.

	God		
Absolute Being	Father	Son	Holy Spirit
Relative Being	Objective World	Midjective World	Subjective World

The Epistemological Worlds of the Bible

In the Biblical worldview, the separation of the objective and the subjective worlds only stands for the relative beings; and there is a Midjective world to connect them. The three persons of God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit) corresponds with the objective, midjective and subjective worlds respectively, but is one essence and do not separate. Thus the knowledge of the Father through the Son and by the Holy Spirit can reach the Absolute Being that corresponds with the Objective World; otherwise man cannot.

Rational Steps to Believe in Yahweh

There is one Triune God, Who Is the Designer and Creator of the Universe, a Moral, Infinite and Perfect Being					
There is only one God, who is the Designer and Creator of the Universe, a Moral, Infinite and Perfect Being					Yahweh is Triune
God = the Creator, the Designer, the Moral Being, the Infinite and Perfect Being				There is one God	Yahweh is the God
God = the Creator	God = the Designer	God = the Moral Being	God = the Infinite and Perfect Being	Natural laws seem to unite as one	There is only one God
Cosmological Argument	Teleological Argument	Axiological Argument	Ontological Argument	Natural Science	Judeo-Christian Bible

The Gambler's Argument from Blaise Pascal

If there is no God, believing makes no difference from non-believing in benefits or consequences. If there is a God, believing would bring infinite amounts of benefits, while non-believing would bring infinite amount of bad consequences. A rational gambler would choose the believing option.