

# Case for Christ Lesson Plans

Fall Semester, 2024

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## Week #1

September 9, 2024

1. Class Requirements and Expectations
2. What is Apologetics?
  - a. The defense of faith
  - b. Greek word “apologia” means defense, as a lawyer gives at trial
3. Introduction to Lee Strobel and *The Case for Christ*
  - a. We are beginning our journey through the lens of someone who thought, “Intelligent people didn’t believe in him. All it took was a quick look at the evidence to know that Christianity was nothing but superstition and wishful thinking.”
  - b. “To me, there was far too much evidence that God was merely a product of wishful thinking, of ancient mythology, of primitive superstition.”
4. Create Discussion Groups
  - a. 4 groups of 4 to 5 students
  - b. Elect a spokesperson for each group (rotating position)
  - c. Elect a secretary for each group (rotation position)
  - d. Ground Rules for Discussion Groups
    - i. Be kind and respectful
    - ii. Discuss the questions / material assigned
5. Discussion (15 minutes)
  - a. While still an atheist, Lee’s initial conclusion was this: If Christianity is true, it has huge implications for one’s life. What do you think he meant by this statement? Do you agree or disagree with his assessment? And why?
  - b. What do you believe about Jesus? Was he a great moral teacher? Was he a prophet? Did he possess special powers? Was he God in human form or was he simply a good man that legend has elevated to the status of the divine?

- c. Are the first four books of the New Testament – Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John – accurate biographies of the life and teachings of Jesus? How can you be certain?
- 6. Discussion Presentation (15 minutes)
  - a. Spokesperson from each group will share their group's conclusions
- 7. Homework (due September 16, 2024)
  - a. Complete Introduction Worksheet
    - i. What is your current position regarding what you believe in Jesus Christ?
    - ii. What level of confidence do you have that Jesus is an actual historical figure?
    - iii. To what extent have you investigated the claims of Christianity prior to this discussion? Describe your experience.
  - b. Read Chapters 1-2
    - i. Chapter 1 - What's Wrong with Me?
    - ii. Chapter 2 - Did Jesus Really Think He was God?
    - iii. *Christianity: A Religion of Intolerance?*

## **Week #2**

September 16, 2024

- 1. Discussion Group
  - a. Elect a spokesperson for each group (rotating position)
  - b. Elect a secretary for each group (rotation position)
- 2. Discussion (30 minutes)
  - a. According to John 10:22-33, what did Jesus appear to believe about himself? What do you think his followers believed about him? What did the religious leaders of that time believe about him?
  - b. What did Jesus get for claiming to be God?
  - c. Do you believe that someone would willingly die for a claim that he knew was a lie?
  - d. Is Christ being exclusive?
- 3. Discussion Presentation and Q&A (15 minutes)
  - a. Spokesperson from each group will share their group's conclusions
- 4. Homework (due September 23, 2024)

- a. Read Chapter 3 – Was Jesus Crazy to Claim to Be God?
- b. Complete Discussion Worksheet
  - i. Would you say that Jesus' weeping at the death of his friend, Lazarus (John 11:1-44) was an appropriate or inappropriate response? Why or why not?
  - ii. Would you say Jesus' anger displayed towards the merchants for taking advantage of the poor (Luke 19:45-46) was an appropriate or inappropriate response? Why or why not?
  - iii. How does the theory of hypnosis hold up as an explanation for Jesus' miracles? Explain.
  - iv. What's crazier – living and even dying for a cause you really believe in, or just running with the rat race until you die?

### Week #3

September 23, 2024

1. Discussion Group
  - a. Elect a spokesperson for each group (rotating position)
  - b. Elect a secretary for each group (rotation position)
2. Discussion (30 minutes)
  - a. Go over the Discussion Worksheet Questions from Homework
    - i. Would you say that Jesus' weeping at the death of his friend, Lazarus (John 11:1-44) was an appropriate or inappropriate response? Why or why not?
    - ii. Would you say Jesus' anger displayed towards the merchants for taking advantage of the poor (Luke 19:45-46) was an appropriate or inappropriate response? Why or why not?
    - iii. How does the theory of hypnosis hold up as an explanation for Jesus' miracles? Explain.
    - iv. What's crazier – living and even dying for a cause you really believe in, or just running with the rat race until you die?
3. Discussion Presentation and Q&A (15 minutes)
  - a. Spokesperson from each group will share their group's conclusions
4. Homework (due September 30, 2024)
  - a. Read Chapter 4
    - i. Chapter 4 – Did Jesus Match the Identity of the Messiah?
    - ii. *Living and Forgiving Like God*

- b. Complete Discussion Worksheet
  - i. Did Christ fulfill these predictions (most importantly known as prophecies) that were written hundreds of years before he was born?
  - ii. What do you think are the chances someone could fulfill 8 specific, detail filled prophecies in their lifetime? Explain your calculations.
  - iii. Does Jesus match the sketch of God that we find in the New Testament? Why or why not?

## **Week #4**

*September 30, 2024*

1. Discussion Group
  - a. Elect a spokesperson for each group (rotating position)
  - b. Elect a secretary for each group (rotation position)
2. Discussion (30 minutes)
  - a. Go over the Discussion Worksheet Questions from Homework
    - i. Did Christ fulfill these predictions (more importantly known as prophecies) that were written hundreds of years before he was born?
    - ii. What do you think are the chances someone could fulfill 8 specific, detail filled prophecies in their lifetime? Explain your calculations.
    - iii. Does Jesus match the sketch of God that we find in the New Testament? Why or why not?
3. Discussion Presentation and Q&A
  - a. Spokesperson from each group will share their group's conclusions
4. Homework (due October 7, 2024)
  - a. Read Chapter 5 – Can you Trust Christ's Biographies?
  - b. Complete Discussion Worksheet
    - i. Is the collection of ancient documents, more importantly known as The Holy Bible, reliable in what it reports? Explain your answer.
    - ii. Do you believe the concept that two different eyewitnesses who saw the exact same event happen would have

variations, perhaps contradictions, to their accounts? Why or why not?

- iii. Would Christianity have taken root as quickly as it did if the disciples were saying things that their audiences knew were exaggerated or false? Why or why not?
- iv. Homer's *Iliad* is backed up by 650 vetted ancient manuscripts. The New Testament is backed up by 24,000 vetted ancient manuscripts. Why do you think, when polled, the average person believes the *Iliad* is the more historically accurate book out of the two?

## Week #5

October 7, 2024

1. Discussion Group
  - a. Elect a spokesperson for each group (rotating position)
  - b. Elect a secretary for each group (rotation position)
2. Discussion (30 minutes)
  - a. Go over the Discussion Worksheet Questions from Homework
    - i. Is the collection of ancient documents, more importantly known as The Holy Bible, reliable in what it reports? Explain your answer.
    - ii. Do you believe the concept that two different eyewitnesses who saw the exact same event happen would have variations, perhaps contradictions, to their accounts? Why or why not?
    - iii. Would Christianity have taken root as quickly as it did if the disciples were saying things that their audiences knew were exaggerated or false? Why or why not?
    - iv. Homer's *Iliad* is backed up by 650 vetted ancient manuscripts. The New Testament is backed up by 24,000 vetted ancient manuscripts. Why do you think, when polled, the average person believes the *Iliad* is the more historically accurate book out of the two?
3. Discussion Presentation and Q&A
  - a. Spokesperson from each group will share their group's conclusions
4. Homework (due October 14, 2024)

- a. Read Chapter 6
  - i. Chapter 6 – Is There a Case for Christ Outside the Bible?
  - ii. *Jesus and Slavery*
- b. Complete Discussion Worksheet
  - i. If archaeology shows that the New Testament writers were accurate in reporting historical and geographical details, does this increase your confidence that they would be similarly careful in recording events about Jesus? Why or why not?
  - ii. Ron acted on his belief even though he risked 20 years in prison. Why do you think he had such strongly held convictions?
  - iii. Do you believe that there is evidence outside of the Bible that Christ is real and the Christian faith means something? Why or why not?
  - iv. Why do you think Jesus didn't put an end to slavery, once and for all, when he lived in Palestine some 2,000 years ago?

## **Week #6**

*October 14, 2024*

1. Discussion Group
  - a. Elect a spokesperson for each group (rotating position)
  - b. Elect a secretary for each group (rotation position)
2. Discussion (30 minutes)
  - a. Go over the Discussion Worksheet Questions from Homework
    - i. If archaeology shows that the New Testament writers were accurate in reporting historical and geographical details, does this increase your confidence that they would be similarly careful in recording events about Jesus? Why or why not?
    - ii. Ron acted on his belief even though he risked 20 years in prison. Why do you think he had such strongly held convictions?
    - iii. Do you believe that there is evidence outside of the Bible that Christ is real and the Christian faith means something? Why or why not?

- iv. Why do you think Jesus didn't put an end to slavery, once and for all, when he lived in Palestine some 2,000 years ago?
- 3. Discussion Presentation and Q&A
  - a. Spokesperson from each group will share their group's conclusions
- 4. Homework (due October 21, 2024)
  - a. Read Chapter 7 – Did Jesus Fake His Death?
  - b. Complete Discussion Worksheet
    - i. Did Jesus really die on the cross? Why or why not?
    - ii. Is it plausible to think that Jesus faked his own death? Why or why not?
    - iii. How does John 19:34 serve as one of the medical proofs that Jesus did die on the cross?
    - iv. What could possibly have motivated Jesus to willingly allow himself to be degraded and brutalized the way he was?

## **Week #7**

*October 21, 2024*

- 1. Discussion Group
  - a. Elect a spokesperson for each group (rotating position)
  - b. Elect a secretary for each group (rotation position)
- 2. Discussion (30 minutes)
  - a. Go over the Discussion Worksheet Questions from Homework
    - i. Did Jesus really die on the cross? Why or why not?
    - ii. Is it plausible to think that Jesus faked his own death? Why or why not?
    - iii. How does John 19:34 serve as one of the medical proofs that Jesus was indeed dead upon the cross?
    - iv. What could possibly have motivated Jesus to willingly allow himself to be degraded and brutalized the way he was?
    - v. What is one medical detail about Jesus' death / crucifixion that you learned about in this chapter?
- 3. Discussion Presentation and Q&A
  - a. Spokesperson from each group will share their group's conclusions
- 4. Homework (due October 28, 2024)
  - a. Read Chapter 8 – What Happened to the Body?

- b. Complete Discussion Worksheet
  - i. Is that empty tomb a sign that Jesus came back to life, or did Jesus become just one more missing person after his death?
  - ii. What do you think? Did Peter believe that Christ's tomb was empty or not?
  - iii. What do you think? Did the disciples have sufficient motive and opportunity to steal Jesus' body from the tomb? Why or why not?

## **Week #8**

*October 28, 2024*

1. Discussion Group
  - a. Elect a spokesperson for each group (rotating position)
  - b. Elect a secretary for each group (rotation position)
2. Discussion (30 minutes)
  - a. Go over the Discussion Worksheet Questions from Homework
    - i. Is that empty tomb a sign that Jesus came back to life, or did Jesus become just one more missing person after his death?
    - ii. What do you think? Did Peter believe that Christ's tomb was empty or not?
    - iii. What do you think? Did the disciples have sufficient motive and opportunity to steal Jesus' body from the tomb? Why or why not?
3. Discussion Presentation and Q&A
  - a. Spokesperson from each group will share their group's conclusions
4. Homework (due November 4, 2024)
  - a. Read Chapter 9 - What Did Jesus Do after Easter?
  - b. Complete Discussion Worksheet
    - i. Would nearly 129 straight hours of eyewitness testimony make you more likely to believe that Jesus came back to life? Why or why not?
    - ii. Which post-Resurrection Christ sighting do you find most impactful (from the list of sightings outlined in Resurrection Reports, pg. 103)?
    - iii. What are your thoughts about the Hallucination Theory as it relates to Christ sightings post-Resurrection?

## Week #9

November 4, 2024

1. Discussion Group
  - a. Elect a spokesperson for each group (rotating position)
  - b. Elect a secretary for each group (rotation position)
2. Discussion (30 minutes)
  - a. Go over the Discussion Worksheet Questions from Homework
    - i. Would nearly 129 straight hours of eyewitness testimony make you more likely to believe that Jesus came back to life? Why or why not?
    - ii. Which post-Resurrection Christ sighting do you find most impactful (from the list of sightings outlined in Resurrection Reports, pg. 103)?
    - iii. What are your thoughts about the Hallucination Theory as it relates to Christ sightings post-Resurrection?
    - iv. What do you think about Gary Habermas' statement?
      1. "If there's a resurrection, there's a heaven." (pg. 109)
3. Discussion Presentation and Q&A
  - a. Spokesperson from each group will share their group's conclusions
4. Homework (due November 11, 2024)
  - a. Read *Conclusion: So What?*
  - b. Complete Discussion Worksheet
    - i. What is your favorite "If . . . Then . . ."? (pg. 112) Explain your answer.
    - ii. Which "If You Are . . . Then Try Reading . . ." are you? (pg. 115) Explain your answer.
    - iii. Do you believe the Case for Christ is conclusive? Why or why not?
    - iv. What was the number one most interesting and/or impactful thing you learned over the course of this semester?

## Week #10

November 11, 2024

1. Discussion Group
  - a. Elect a spokesperson for each group (rotating position)
  - b. Elect a secretary for each group (rotation position)

2. Discussion (30 minutes)

a. Go over the Discussion Worksheet Questions from Homework

- i. What is your favorite “If . . . Then . . .”? (pg. 112) Explain your answer.
- ii. Which “If You Are . . . Then Try Reading . . .” are you? (pg. 115) Explain your answer.
- iii. Do you believe the Case for Christ is conclusive? Why or why not?
- iv. What was the number one most interesting and/or impactful thing you learned over the course of this semester?

3. Discussion Presentation and Q&A

- a. Spokesperson from each group will share their group’s conclusions