

used to be people who believed that the earth was flat, but now everybody knows the earth is round and every intelligent person knows that the Pentateuch is a body of intertwined sources.” This is the attitude which is taken today, but it is contrary to the evidence we are going to examine in this course. The professing Christian world is now divided, with one side thinking this theoretical division of the Pentateuch to be an absurd approach that no sane person could ever accept, while the other side — which includes most of the seminaries and the departments of religion in virtually every university that has such a department — takes exactly the opposite attitude and considers anyone who questions the theory as beneath intellectual respectability.

Another important factor in our discussion of the Pentateuch is an attitude that is vehemently and forcefully taught in some Apologetics departments today, which asserts that one does not and can not know anything unless he recognizes God first. Those who hold this viewpoint argue that we must accept their presuppositions before we can discuss matters of fact or spiritual reality. This amounts to adopting an attitude of opposition so complete that it makes real discussion impossible. It is the logical fallacy of circular reasoning when one asserts that you are simply wrong unless you blindly accept correct presuppositions “on faith.” This makes faith appear to be an intellectual “leap,” lacking any reasonable foundation. Such an attitude denies man’s innate propensity to think in a linear fashion, and is contrary to the attitude of all the writers of the scriptures as well as to the attitudes of the makers of the creeds of most churches. Many who hold this attitude are very sincere Christians, but I do not think such an attitude can really advance the Christian faith. I believe that holding such an attitude in regard to the Pentateuch produces very harmful results. The present course is based upon a diametrically opposite viewpoint. Its foundation-principle, like that of every apologetic work I have ever done, is this: there are certain facts that are “brute facts,” if you want to call them that, that exist whether we like them or not, whether we presuppose them or not, whether we believe them or not, and that it is the duty of all who seek to serve the Lord in an intelligent fashion to examine them completely and impartially, in a way that does not “piously” deny reason or the evidence it faces.