

DOWNLOAD PDF SHOULD A PRIEST CALL A DOCTOR? THEODICY, OPPRESSION, AND QUIETISM

Chapter 1 : Reflections on Theodicy (part 2):Dear God, "Why?" and "Where?" - Almost Heresy

Is God a white racist? A preamble to Black theology,. a Priest Call a Doctor? Theodicy, Oppression, and Quietism --Divine a Priest Call a Doctor? Theodicy.

These movementsâ€”in turn, philosophical and politicalâ€”have made an impact on the way in which philosophy conceives itself, raising important questions about rationality and the nature of subjectivity. Postmodernism is one way of framing that shift. Postmodernism has often been characterised as against modernism, against the enlightenment and against modernity. The postmodern cultural condition is famously said to involve what we might now call the globalised experience of consumer capitalismâ€”the monetary access to a simultaneous diversity of products and experiences from all corners of the globe. Speculative philosophy pertains to metaphysics, ontology and epistemology, that is, the way in which philosophy deals with the big questions of reality and knowledge. The emancipatory label refers to discourses of liberation; ethical and political projects that aim to put an end to oppression or domination. Irigaray, Derrida and Deleuze, each in their own way, read the classical texts of philosophy, jointly provoking the legacy which Lyotard addressed. Taken together, their work could be said to have undermined the key tenets of Enlightenment thought. What entitles philosophy to make universal claims that speak for everybody and everything? Is it legitimate or desirable for philosophy to attempt to cover the entire field, that is, to totalise? To what extent is philosophy able to furnish the epistemological bases of other disciplinary practices? These questions concern the character and role of philosophical discourse. Indeed, some would argue that this calls into question the very identity of philosophical thought: The controversy addresses the scope and nature of philosophical thinking, and more generally, the legitimacy of universalised forms of theory. These arguments have been conducted in a number of fields. In the philosophy of science, for example, one could imagine that universalisation and totalisation were accepted norms. Yet postmodern philosophers of science have rejected these concepts. Latour and Woolgar have weighed into the debate through treating science as a form of social construction. The universalism of scientific theory has also been discussed in epistemological terms: In these examples, the universal dimension of science has been reformulated so as to conceive it as a practice that is specific, situated, localised and particular. The question then becomes: Feminist and Marxist philosophers have also engaged with postmodernism, largely via the politics of enlightenment thought. Here the argument clusters around the implied subject of political discourse. Inasmuch as universalism prevails, the emancipatory subject is conceived in humanist terms: This also has feminist implications. Many of these debates have been framed around the status and desirability of the universal, woman. Ought feminism to pursue the liberation of women in universal terms? What theoretical implications accrue from the marginalisation of women of colour, third world women and other minority groups? Does the existence of hegemonic feminism suggest that universality itself is the problem? Is postmodernism a white, male ruse concocted to deflect women from their political goals? Meaghan Morris argues that feminism is not external to postmodern thought but is equally found within postmodernist forms of discourse. Other feminists have further embraced the postmodern critique of enlightenment universality, claiming that feminist discourse has never adequately represented the entirety of women, and that difference is a better figure around which to organise Young, Yeatman and Gunew. The question of difference within the political arena owes a great deal to the work of the French feminist, Luce Irigaray. Irigaray posed the question of sexual difference in relation to a number of key philosophical texts, arguing that each in its own way reduces sexual difference to a version of masculine sameness. Irigaray argued the point with respect to discourses overtly concerned with sexuality and sexual difference Freud, Lacan but also with respect to philosophical texts that purport sexual neutrality Plato, Merleau-Ponty. Phallogocentrism pertains to philosophical systems of representation which manifest a certain kind of patriarchal structure organised around sameness. Sameness, in this context, refers to an economy order of representation based upon the primacy of masculine subjectivity whether explicit or not. Universalism and

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totalisation are manifestations of phallogocentric thought inasmuch as they are forms of representation which are organised around a univocal perspective. Michel Foucault is also a key figure of postmodernist thought. Although Foucault resisted any simplistic opposition to the Enlightenment as such, the breadth of his work poses a sustained, critical engagement with notions of rationality, knowledge and subjectivity. His work on sexuality and subjectivity casts doubt on the sense that there is a universal, ahistorical human subject beyond the specificities of time and place. His writings on the discourses of biomedicine, sexuality, the prison system and the rise of modern psychiatry traced the contours of a variety of knowledges, each with its embedded, institutionalised forms of truth. By teasing out the very different understandings that permeated different epochs, Foucault promoted the view that epistemological difference produces truth-effects rather than refers to external grounds which supply what might be called truth conditions. His work marks a break with structuralist linguistics which tended to focus upon relations of language, moving towards a complex elaboration of power, discourse and the body. Where Marxism might have emphasised ideology as the means by which social subjects take up their place in the world via false consciousness or ideological subject-production, Foucault looked to the ways in which human bodies come to be socially inscribed as the means by which subjectivity is produced. For Foucault, like Irigaray, the body-subject needs to be approached in socio-cultural terms. Consciousness is no longer regarded as a universal, unmarked faculty whose transcendental structure can be analyzed a priori Kant or by bracketing the empirical world Husserl. Their common emphasis on the body as a site of social elaboration enters the postmodern critique of in this context, disembodied universal, totalised knowledge. A Sydney-based publication, entitled *Local Consumption*, also published on questions of representation, semiotics and sexuality. More than people attended this event, which featured international speakers, Jean Baudrillard and Gayatri Spivak, and disseminated the work of Foucault, Deleuze, Irigaray, Kristeva, Derrida and Lyotard Grosz a. Grosz and Gatens were key figures in circulating French feminism. It is difficult to contain postmodern theorising within the confines of philosophy, as many other disciplines have engaged with its debates and contributed in theoretical terms. Several of the above philosophers participated in or provoked these debates. What is Feminist Theory? These academics have since forged their own intellectual pathways in a diversity of directions. There is now a generation of younger philosophers who are heir to these discussions and the work of the philosophers, here and abroad, who engaged in them. Ultimately, postmodernism functioned as a catalyst for critical debates regarding the status and nature of philosophy, theory, politics and knowledge. And although it drew on the work of many important philosophers, it did not exhaust their relevance. Poststructuralism Jack Reynolds While it is difficult to precisely define poststructuralism, we can begin ostensibly by noting some of the philosophers who are most consistently and famously associated with the term. As such, poststructuralism refers primarily to those philosophers working in France who contested and problematised the reigning orthodoxy in the humanities and social sciences in the early s, which at that time was structuralism. Before positively considering their work and the way in which their overlapping but not univocal interests came to form what we today refer to as poststructuralism, it is important to consider their immediate predecessor on the French scene, structuralism. The linguistics of Ferdinand de Saussure was also garnering renewed attention. Structuralism sought to arrive at a stable and secure knowledge of a system or a structure, by charting differences within that structure, and it sought to do so without any references to subjectivity and consciousness. Rather than reinvent a philosophy of freedom in order to challenge this, they instead insisted upon the role of unpredictable forces in the genesis of any structure, law, or norm. The student revolutions in Paris in May were an enduring and formative influence upon their work, but for all of them some kind of rupture is a transcendental necessity for the event and not merely a contingent fact. Although they could not be said to be irrationalists, their work consistently pointed to the limits of rationality, reason, and knowledge. On their view, these limits are not merely peripheral but come to constitute and problematise any so-called core, and the sometimes polemical debate between Derrida and John Searle on the Austinian distinction between normal and parasitic speech i. This may seem a rare occurrence, but, for him, differends are in fact ubiquitous, prevailing whenever one phrase is linked onto

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another, and where language is used in mutually exclusive ways e. An undecidable cannot conform to either polarity of a dichotomy e. While meaning has a context that saturates it, on this view it is nonetheless never secured once and for all. Genealogical, archaeological, dialectical, and deconstructive analyses of the history of Western philosophy were also important to all of the poststructuralists in their efforts to transform and make new. These engagements were never intended to constitute simple critiques of this tradition, however, but as sustained efforts to inhabit from within and to open up space for new possibilities by showing possibilities that have been covered over. While appropriations of their thought have sometimes resulted in a monolithic treatment of this history, it is important to note that a revaluation of difference and an ongoing concern with marginality also characterised their work. This simply means that it is spurious to begin from the assumption that consciousness and subjectivity are fundamental when they are in fact socio-culturally produced, albeit not in as over-determined a way as the structuralists might have thought. Poststructuralism in Australasia Having schematically defined poststructuralism, we cannot consider the history of this movement within Australasia without simultaneously considering the history of Continental or European philosophy in the Antipodes. In this regard, as with most English-speaking countries, Continental or European philosophy has not been the dominant kind of philosophy taught in Australasian universities and it has, sometimes, been treated with disdain. Shortly after, the student revolutions around the world began—May in France, just afterwards in Australia. These events had a profound influence upon academic philosophy, as did the Vietnam War, which likewise polarised the academic philosophical community. Indeed, in the early s the structuralist Marxism of Althusser who taught Derrida and Foucault was one of the major factors behind a rather acrimonious split of the philosophy department at the University of Sydney into the Department of General Philosophy and the Department of Traditional and Modern Philosophy. It also involved a dispute between those who thought that feminism, Marxism, and Continental philosophy were worth pursuing, and those who did not, or at least did not think that they were appropriately classified as philosophy, which on the analytic understanding ought to be bound up with a respect for clarity and a commitment to argumentation conforming to various logical or probabilistic norms—suffice it to say that the poststructuralist concern with style and manner of expression often meant their work contravened these norms, notwithstanding the difficulties of translation. Indeed, at the same time the first breaths of French poststructuralism were also beginning to have an influence. Capitalism and Schizophrenia, had also just come out in French, in its English translation and brought the authors immediate fame. Meaghan Morris and Paul Patton edited and translated pieces on Foucault and Deleuze in the late s, inspiring all kinds of people, including the film critic Adrian Martin. Much of this growth happened in and around Sydney. Indeed, despite the fact that W. Boyce Gibson University of Melbourne translated the work of Husserl, historically it is difficult to deny that Sydney has been the centre of Continental philosophy in Australasia, and this is arguably particularly so in regard to poststructuralism. More recently, the University of Queensland and La Trobe University have become stronger in this regard. Murdoch University has had a presence in this area since its inception, through the work of Horst Ruthrof, Niall Lucy, Jeff Malpas and others. Marion Tapper and Chris Cordner have been stalwarts at the University of Melbourne, ensuring that Continental philosophy receives fair treatment, although one could not call either of them card-carrying poststructuralists. The University of Auckland has been one of the few institutions in New Zealand to accord any attention to either Continental philosophy or poststructuralism through Julian Young, Robert Wicks, Stefano Franchi, Lisa Guenther, Matheson Russell and others, but it has generally been ignored by the rest of the New Zealand academic philosophical community. Excepting a brief period in the mid s, the prestigious journal that represents philosophy in this country, the Australasian Journal of Philosophy AJP, has been focussed on analytic philosophy. Many of these journals and organisations have been effectively run by postgraduate students of philosophy, and are evidence of an ongoing passion for poststructuralist philosophy in Australasia that has managed to flourish somewhat rhizomatically, to borrow the term that Deleuze and Guattari have made their own, in that they have often been promulgated without major publishers, or major academics, behind them. Indeed, it should also be noted that some important work

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on poststructuralism has been done outside of those employed to teach philosophy. While poststructuralist philosophy remains popular with students in Australia, it is interesting to note that many influential Australian philosophers with expertise in this area have moved to overseas positions including Braidotti, Grosz, Deutscher, Buchanan, Claire Colebrook, and Andrew Benjamin before his return to Monash University. While some of these may have gone for promotional reasons, young academics in this area are also moving overseas. It is hoped that they can one day return to a philosophy community with more space for them. With all of the major poststructuralist philosophers now dead, and the French nouveaux philosophes not garnering anywhere near the same critical purchase and attention internationally, questions abound about what is post-poststructuralism. However his interests turned to pure mathematics then to philosophy, and he completed his B. During his philosophy Honours year he encountered both the philosophy of time , which was to become a long-term interest, and Hugh Mellor then visiting ANU , who was to become his Ph.

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Chapter 2 : Port Manteaux Word Maker

Is God a white racist? by Jones, Should a Priest Call a Doctor? Theodicy, Oppression, and Quietism Toward a Black Theodicy for Today: XI.

O God, what a life, and it is thine, O priest of Jesus Christ! So now you have a general idea of the priesthood and of the life of the priest: The next question is, of course, "How do I know if the holy priesthood is for me? How do I know if this is what Almighty God intends for me? If this, which is but the supereminent knowledge of Jesus Christ, be lacking in a priest, all things are lacking. Pius X *Haerent Animo* August, This call of Christ, Who said: Paul, "but he that is called by God, as Aaron was. Well-intentioned but misguided authors have erected certain merely accidental elements, rarely found, into the primary criteria for the discernment of vocations, with the result that their conclusions, and the resultant practical attitude, have without doubt discouraged numerous eligible young men from undertaking or continuing ecclesiastical studies. To avoid these misconceptions and their regrettable consequences, let us examine the true notion of the vocation to the priesthood. The Council of Trent declares: This important truth has equally important implications. The repeated solemn proclamations of Popes and Councils exhort all Bishops to a meticulous effort to choose the most suitable candidates for the Holy Priesthood. In expectation of this summons of the Bishop to Holy Orders the true "vocation" the role of the candidate is to prepare himself conscientiously by pursuing the several-year program for the intellectual and spiritual formation of future priests which the Church has gradually perfected, especially since the Council of Trent. But how am I to know whether I should undertake this lengthy program of formation, whether I should try to prepare myself for the summons by the Bishop which constitutes the true vocation? A private revelation; 2. The sensible attraction of the Holy Ghost; or, 3. A prudent choice made with the aid of divine grace. The error of many authors of a certain period, the influences of which still persist, consisted in seeking, to justify every vocation, the sensible attraction of the Holy Ghost, something actually experienced by a few young men, and which, in fact, the Bishop does not even consider in examining the suitability of candidates for the priesthood. A vocation requires no overpowering "feeling" that one is "called". Unfortunately, for several decades this misconception probably frightened many otherwise qualified young men who "felt" nothing extraordinary away from the seminary and from the priesthood. In actual fact, the intention to become a priest most often takes the form of a decision calmly and prudently made by the candidate himself, usually after prayer, reading, reflection, discussion with his parents and with a priest, etc. This is indeed the very way in which the young man customarily formulates his developing desire within himself: These years of formation seek to prepare him intellectually and spiritually for the demanding office of the priest, and will permit him one day, if he takes advantage of them and acquires the necessary learning and sanctity, humbly to solicit of the Bishop the summons to Holy Orders. He must not have any physical handicap, or disease such as epilepsy, which would render difficult his celebration of Mass or the accomplishment of other rites of the Church or priestly duties; nor may he have any physical deformity which would subject him, and his priesthood, to derision. Furthermore, at least before receiving any Order, the candidate must have received both the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation. What should I do for the time being? We cannot reasonably desire something which we do not truly know, and the decision to enter the priesthood must, obviously, be made in all possible seriousness. Study first of all the basic teaching of the Church on the Sacrament of Holy Orders. Then do some reading on the life of a priest. You can still purchase, new, several traditional Catholic books on the priesthood, such as those of Dom Columba Marmion *Christ, the Ideal of the Priest*, Saint Joseph Cafasso *The Priest, Man of God*, and Saint Alphonsus Liguori *Selva*, or the *Dignity and Duties of the Priest*; and you can still obtain the invaluable Papal encyclicals on the priesthood without undue difficulty, separately or in collected form. Other excellent books, such as that of Cardinal Manning *The Eternal Priesthood*, may be discovered in Catholic libraries or obtained from certain used book dealers. Needless to say, no one should make the solemn decision to enter the service of God without the

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guidance of God Himself. Speak with a faithful Catholic priest about the priesthood. Who could be more familiar with it? He will also be able to help you to determine whether you have the necessary aptitudes for this high calling. But in this crisis of the Church, where can a young man who wants to be a true priest go? He could enter the service of his diocesan bishop as a parish priest; or join a foreign missionary congregation, or one of the Religious Orders which leads an active life of preaching and teaching; or he could enter a monastic community and spend his life in quiet study and constant prayer. Unfortunately the disintegration of the Church since Vatican II has caused all of these possibilities to disappear: Only very few traditional religious communities remain. Outside these communities, the International Society of Saint Pius X, founded in by His Grace, Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, offers the young man the only feasible choice, in a flourishing work obviously favored by Almighty God. I am only a bishop of the Catholic Church who continues to transmit its doctrine. I think, and this will certainly not be too far off, that you will be able to engrave on my tombstone these words of Saint Paul: Sermon of the Episcopal Consecrations. After completing his studies at the excellent French Seminary at Rome, where he obtained doctoral degrees in philosophy and theology, he was ordained to the Holy Priesthood in , and entered the missionary Fathers of the Holy Ghost on the insistence of his priest-brother the following year. In , His Grace became the first Vicar Apostolic of Dakar in Senegal; in , Apostolic Delegate for all of French-speaking Africa; in , first Archbishop of Dakar, which post he held until , at which time he surrendered his episcopal throne to a native priest whom he himself had ordained Cardinal Thiandoum. During the Council Archbishop Lefebvre battled vigorously alongside others, though with little success, in the defense of traditional Catholic teaching. In , as the spirit of the rebellion inspired by Vatican II swept through the Church, his religious gathered in General Chapter. More and more insistently they clamored for reforms reforms which His Grace knew would lead to the disintegration of the Congregation which he so loved. Rather than pass into history as the superior responsible for such a disaster, he resigned his office. At this time, Archbishop Lefebvre had no other intention than to live peacefully in retirement in Rome. I had to continue. This project began on a small scale in the Swiss university city of Fribourg. On June 6, , the Most Reverend Francois Charriere, Bishop of Lausanne, Geneva, and Fribourg, gave his authorization to Archbishop Lefebvre to open a small residence for seminarians who would attend classes at the University, less affected than others by the rampant new teachings. In he blessed the cornerstone of the new buildings to be constructed adjacent to the house formerly belonging to the Canons of St. Meanwhile Archbishop Lefebvre realized that it would be wise to unite his seminarians canonically in an officially recognized religious society. The ever increasing number of vocations has even permitted the Society to open comparable seminaries: And all this in the middle of the much vaunted Year of Reconciliation! Because of the invalidity of these measures, the Society of Saint Pius X continues to exist in complete legality. In accordance with the traditional Code of Canon Law canon , a society of diocesan right can only be suppressed by the Holy See, whereas Bishop Mamie had acted on his own authority. There existed, furthermore, no justifying cause for this action. An open hearing of the case of loyal Catholics against the "new Church" would obviously have constituted too grave an embarrassment for its leaders. The numerous letters and documents of Archbishop Lefebvre, Pope Paul VI, and the various Cardinals and Bishops involved, have all been published in collected form, and provide a more complete history of this somewhat confusing affair. The Society of Saint Pius X, then, continues to exist legally, to incardinate its own priests as three Roman documents from past years show that it has the right to do, and to carry on its important work for the preservation of the Catholic Faith. In absence of true seminaries throughout the Catholic world, it continues to form true priests according to the principles on which every seminary once operated, in traditional Catholic doctrine and piety. Here a principle more important than any canonical argument enters in: *Salus animarum suprema lex*, the salvation of souls is the supreme law. Archbishop Lefebvre knows that stopping his work would be contributing to the destruction of the priesthood, and thus of the Church, and to the loss of countless souls. He, and the Society of Saint Pius X, have the duty to continue. The Society, first of all, is a "society of common life without vows," that is, its members live in communities of at least two or three, in the smaller houses as do members of other Religious Orders and

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Congregations, but they do not take public vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience as, for example, monks and friars do. Each country, grouping several houses, has a District Superior, and the whole Society has a Superior General with a council of advisors. Although the Society also has Brothers and Sisters who aid its priest-members, it is above all a society of priests, and the spirit which Archbishop Lefebvre wishes the Society to have is above all a priestly spirit. Priestly, in its wholehearted fidelity to the Holy Catholic Church. Archbishop Lefebvre declared in We are working to construct, to continue what the Church has always done, and nothing else. We are not linked with any movement, with any party, or with any organization in particular. Priestly, in its missionary spirit. The members of the Society normally exercise an active apostolate, nourished, of course, by a fervent life of prayer. From these principles, let us pass to the consideration of the actual work of the Society of Saint Pius X. As we have seen, the work of forming true priests represents the principal concern of the Society. Thus a certain number of its members, once ordained, will be called to give their energies to this noble task, as professors and spiritual directors in the several seminaries which the Society has already founded or will found in different countries of the world. Those whom their superiors do not designate for seminary work will find a place in one of the other houses, or priories, of the Society, where they will lead a common life of prayer and work together with another or several other members of the Society. At the priory they will provide the true Mass and Sacraments, and religious instruction for the faithful of the area, and preach retreats of the sort which bear great fruits of conversion and sanctification. From there, their apostolate will also radiate over surrounding areas as they travel to administer the Sacraments, and encourage and instruct Catholics distressed by the present condition of the Church. In the first centuries of the Church, scanty documentation leads us to believe that the young men desiring to enter the priesthood received their training privately, living with, learning from, and helping out the local Bishop and his priests. But various circumstances led to abuses and a gradual degeneration of studies and discipline, until the Council of Trent. This holy Council, which gave such meticulous attention to the improvement of Church discipline in every domain, considered with particular concern the question of priestly formation. Finally in , in its 23rd session, the Council issued its decree on seminaries, which remains to this day the fundamental law on the formation of the clergy. The seminary exists, then, to form priests. What does this formation entail? The very nature of the priesthood gives us the simple answer: His preparation in the seminary corresponds to these future duties: Every detail of the life and studies at the seminary seeks to prepare the young man in this way. What is daily life like at the seminary? The community prays together at 6: Then follows half an hour of silent meditation. Thus prepared for the day, they go to breakfast around 8: The morning classes are at 9: The hour of Sext is prayed at

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Chapter 3 : Simone Weil - Wikipedia

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They provided me with support in many ways, and I can never repay them for all they have done for me, both in relation to this program and in almost every other area of my life as well. Then I would like to thank all my friends who are far too numerous to mention by name. I would not have made it without their prayers and encouragement. I must make special mention of the late Dr. David Allan Hubbard, my first mentor in the program, who provided me with the guidance and encouragement that I sorely needed. I regret very deeply that I was unable to present him with a finished copy of this dissertation before he passed away June 6, I would also like to thank my primary mentor, Dr. Youngblood, whose advice was helpful in many ways. Youngblood was kind enough to take over about halfway through the program when Dr. Hubbard retired in I appreciate his patience due to the length of time it took me to complete the program because iv of financial restraints and a whole host of computer and word processing problems. My secondary mentor, Dr. Fred Bush, also offered some extremely helpful advice and I wish I had been able to incorporate some of his thoughts and insights into this study a little earlier in the process. My external reader, Dr. Duane Garrett also deserves recognition. This study interacts with Dr. And special thanks go to Dr. Andersen, who treated me like family, offering advice and practical help in many ways that I could not have done without as I drew near to the end of this project. I would like to dedicate this dissertation to the memory of my close friend, Zane A. Mills, who died tragically on March 3, He was like family to me for nearly twenty years and no one could have asked for a better friend. He knew more about innocent suffering from personal experience than anyone I have ever known. It is my sincere desire that this dissertation not be left on the academic shelf, but that someday it will contribute toward the ministry of the Church.

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Chapter 4 : New Jerusalem - Wikipedia

William R. Jones () was a professor of religion and director of black studies at Florida State University. A well-known and respected African American theologian and scholar, he was the author of the groundbreaking book Is God A White Racist?, a deep and profound look at the connections between natural evil and social oppression.

You pay tithes of mint and dill and cummin, and have neglected the weightier things of the law: But these you should have done, without neglecting the others. Blind guides, who strain out the gnat and swallow the camel! You cleanse the outside of cup and dish, but inside they are full of plunder and self-indulgence. Blind Pharisee, cleanse first the inside of the cup, so that the outside also may be clean. He focuses on what is so deeply imbedded inside us and not what is obvious and visible to everyone. God wants us to make sure that our hearts are pure and clean, free of any taint and blemish of self-centeredness as we might fall into the same predicament the hard-hearted Pharisees had. Instead of being able to make disciples of all men, because of their self-righteousness and self-centered ways, they turned those whom they drew closer to God twice as evil as them. You travel over sea and land to make a single convert but once he is converted you make a devil of him twice as wicked as yourselves. What is worse is we hardly apply it to ourselves. Today, we need to look within our hearts and try to see if there is something of the Pharisee that has remained unnoticed in our hearts. We have to accept that there is a force that enables us to do good and give love to others yet is overpowered by a sinful force that makes us put importance on the wrong things and on what we do not need to be with our Lord. We have to realize that we are not far from being an authentic Pharisee. We have to give our lives to God as He builds people from the inside out. We have to open the door of our hearts and let Jesus in so that His grace may flow into our hearts, so that He will make us strong inside, so that we may be able to truly bring God, His mercy, love and healing to all men. To do this, we need to see clearly what is deep within us and recognize our imperfections and give our all to working with God till every space within us is alive, filled with His Light and His Spirit! Have we neglected the weightier things of the law: Prayer Heavenly Father, teach me your ways. Mold me and change me. In Jesus, I pray. A hypocrite is an actor or imposter who says one thing but does the opposite or who puts on an outward appearance of doing good while inwardly clinging to wrong attitudes, selfish desires and ambitions, or bad intentions. Many scribes and Pharisees had made it a regular practice to publicly put on a good show of outward zeal and piety with the intention of winning greater honors, privileges, and favors among the people. As the religious experts of their day, they took great pride in their knowledge and outward observance of the commandments and precepts of the law of Moses. They were so exacting in their interpretations and in trying to live them out, that they had little time for much else. By the time they finished compiling their interpretations it took no less than fifty volumes to contain them! Jesus chastised them for neglecting the more important matters of religion, such as justice and the love of God. In their misguided zeal they had lost sight of God and of his purpose for the law. The scribes, however, went to extreme lengths to tithe on insignificant things such as tiny plants with great mathematical accuracy. They were very attentive to minute matters of little importance, but they neglected to care for the needy and the weak. Jesus admonished them because their hearts were not right. They were filled with pride and contempt for others who were not like themselves. They put unnecessary burdens on others while neglecting to show charity, especially to the weak and the poor. Jesus used a humorous example to show how out of proportion matters had gotten with them. Gnats were considered the smallest of insects and camels were considered the largest of animals in Palestine. Both were considered ritually impure. The scribes went to great lengths to avoid contact with gnats, even to the point of straining the wine cup with a fine cloth lest they accidentally swallowed a gnat. The stark contrast must have drawn chuckles as well as groans. God is love and everything he does, including his justice and goodness, flows from his love for us. True love is costly and sacrificial – it both embraces and lifts the burdens of others. Do you allow the love of God to shape and transform the way you live your daily life – including the way you think of others, speak of them, and treat them? He did not

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use flattery or come with self-serving motives as did the religious entrepreneurs who made their way throughout the region. If they remain longer than, they are becoming parasitical and can be regarded as false teachers. Paul is anxious to distinguish himself from these promoters. He was as gentle as a nursing mother. The real function of a priest or teacher is not to pump people full of information and grace but to assist them to spiritual maturity. Philosophers often speak of the Socratic method, a technique designed to elicit truth from students. Socrates used to call himself a midwife in his enabling students to realize their capacity for truth and judgment. We all have the ability to recognize truth within us. The religious teacher is an enabler and not a religious encyclopedia. The function of an apostle, priest or religious teacher is to assist the growth of mature individuals in the Lord. We are in the presence of classic instances of missing the point. The Pharisees engaged in excessive tithing while overlooking the more significant requirements of basic justice and mercy. They strained out the unclean gnat but swallowed the camel. They were preoccupied with the outward appearance of the cup without a second thought for its insides. Spiritual maturity frequently comes to a matter of priorities. The difference between a child and an adult is not found simply in the quantity of information received and retained but in the manner in which that information is processed and ordered. The adult presumably knows what is important and what is not. Spiritual maturity is also a matter of evaluation. Some religious regulations are more important than others. Maturity cannot be taught. It is a gift toward which a good leader helps us grow. Joseph Krempa, Daily Homilies, Vol. Reflection 4 "Housekeeping Of The Heart You also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy. The trouble was, it never stayed clean for long. Gradually I concentrated more on the appearance of a clean house and neglected thorough cleaning. This compromise was not only convenient, it was convincing. Sometimes even I was fooled. But on sunny days my clean-looking house was revealed for what it was "dusty and dirty. When the light of Jesus shined on them, He revealed the truth about their outwardly religious life. For them, inner housecleaning was long overdue. Only those who are clean on the inside will welcome Jesus with confidence when He returns. Is your heart ready? Or is heart-cleaning needed? Now is the time to take care of it! After we have put our faith in Jesus Christ John 3: At the heart of holiness is holiness of the heart Source: Reflection 5 "Just Pretending You who make your boast in the law, do you dishonor God through breaking the law? Soon, however, his conscience began to trouble him. He knew that he was asked to conduct because of his famous ancestor, not due to his own ability. So he decided to give up his lucrative charade and start earning a real living. That question is as shocking as an ice-cold shower, but I know from personal experience that self-deception is possible. The sin that Jesus most often denounced was the hypocrisy of the Pharisees. They were playing the role of God-fearers but not living in holy and grateful obedience to His will. Are we just pretending? That question compels prayerful self-examination. It should motivate us to make the needed changes in our attitudes and in the way we live. Reflection 6 "Camels And Gnats You. They even tithed their household spices! There was nothing particularly wrong with giving attention to these small matters. The problem was that they ignored the bigger issues that matter to God "justice, mercy, and faith. The good coaches do. They have the big picture in mind. Success in the Christian life is much the same. The temptation to elevate an opinion to the level of a conviction can be strong, but doing so is wrong, as we learn from Romans In the first century, religious traditions based on the law were so important to religious leaders that they failed to recognize the One who personified the law, Jesus. They were so focused on minor matters that they neglected the important ones Matt. Scripture says that we need to subjugate even our beliefs and convictions to the law of love Rom. When opinions and preferences become more important to us than what God says is valuable to Him, we have made idols out of our own beliefs. Idolatry is a serious offense because it violates the first and most important command:

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Chapter 5 : The Innocent Sufferer in the Book of Proverbs

Specifically, this will come about when liberation theology's grid of esp oppression is brought into play, when process theology's theodicy is critically examined for elements of quietism, when its moral and geopolitical policy is probed for facets of gradualism and, when it is forced to respond to more sensitive tests for biases of social.

Change Font Size Mark Dowd has experienced two vocations. Dowd, a gay man, has just written his memoir, "Queer and Catholic: Dowd, 58, is an award-winning broadcaster and journalist who has worked for the BBC, Channel 4, and the Guardian. He studied politics at Exeter University before entering the Dominican Order at Blackfriars, Oxford, in , believing he had a calling to the priesthood. Unconsciously by opting for priesthood, he thought he could be gay without anyone asking questions. Instead, he fell in love with someone identified only as Michael, an ex-Dominican friar. He studied international relations at St. Dowd recounts coming out to his parents in his sleep as a teenager, which led to an urgent trip to the doctor for antibiotics as a cure. Dowd charts his up-and-down relationship with his working-class devout Catholic parents, who, while loving him, also disapproved of his homosexuality. In both the memoir and documentary of the same name, Dowd said that he explores "a fundamental conundrum: Dowd spoke to the Bay Area Reporter in an email exchange about what prompted him to write the book. This was the first time many miners and families had face-to-face contact with lesbians and gay men. It was a total game changer. My current radio work with the BBC is looking at how families struggle to deal with suicide and then the one after that looks at the role of faith in dealing with the approach of death in cases of terminal illness. I think I have found in journalism a way to be fully human and open but also it allows me to escape being an apologist for what, at times, can be a repressive and oppressive institution. He now sees it as sexual abuse. I was 14 at the time. Had I acted on his advice, I may have ended up in some very unsavory child exploitation racket never to return home. I never felt angry with him. Just sorry for him. He was a desperately lonely and screwed up man, I think. God rest his soul. He made numerous other religious documentaries, which, for him, were more about a "deepening of faith and a dawning of perspective. Your own travails and worries as a Catholic LGBT man pale into insignificance when faced with the wreckage of the tsunami and the people I met on that journey," Dowd wrote. The choice between faith and being truly gay is a false one. In many parts of the world people are imprisoned and killed for being who they are, which is something no Christian can tolerate. Pope Francis also inspired him. Hearing about a Jesuit priest in northern El Salvador trying to resurrect a radio station that had ended during the civil war there, Dowd traveled to the remote town of Arcatao to help with the project and create Radio Farabundo Marti, as well as advance a renewable energy project, the Blessed Oscar Romero Solar Park. Romero, an archbishop who spoke against the unjust crimes of the military government and was shot while celebrating mass, will be made a saint later this year. It was amazingly humbling, and if I had not had those tearful experiences, I would not have ended up there. It had also redefined my sense of what matters, allowing me to feel things and trust more to emotions than to hard analysis. Using my journalism like that, my languages and changing my will, have given me a sense that my life has not been in vain and that, when I die, I will be able to pass something on. For a man who has no kids, that is not to be underestimated. Romero is like a beacon for me, such self-giving and an example. He is a lodestar, pulling you out of egoism and self-regard. He told me that the civil war had seen large numbers of LGBT volunteers arriving to support the resistance movement. I suspect in future visits I will come out bit by bit. But as I am due to get married next month, I may have to talk about my husband. This could be challenging to very conservative types, to say the least. Right, but by aligning a good part of my time, money, and resources to that community in El Salvador," Dowd wrote. The Church is top down Building a bridge means opening eyes to other ways of being alive and fulfilled in the world. This year-old man is about to marry his fiance, who lives with his ex and with whom he co-parents three adopted boys. Does the church condemn that outright? I am providing material and emotional support to vulnerable children in the context of a loving, committed bond. Until our love is deemed equally valid in the

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eyes of God and the church blesses our commitment, it will always be saying that we are lesser and inferior. That is against the gospel message of inclusion and acceptance. I want LGBTQIA Catholics and Christians to deepen their love of the liberating message of the gospel and to realize that the Jesus story is an asset and not a hindrance in our quest for freedom. Catholicism is more than hierarchy and oppression, it is the organized grouping that teaches kids and feeds fragile people the world over, with so much great work done every day that gets lost in the fog about Rome, birth control, pedophile scandals, etc. We need those women and men inside, offering examples and showing how it can all be done a different way. This is how we have won people over and how we will continue to win people over.

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Chapter 6 : Judaism | History, Beliefs, & Facts | blog.quintoapp.com

That individuals who are prepared to do so should abandon their will to God, eschewing all further spiritual and moral effort, was the teaching of a Spanish priest, Miguel de Molinos, who is said to have developed quietism as a distinct genre of Roman Catholic mysticism around

Yet, the reality is that God-intoxicated prelates, alfas, and imams do not realize how arrogant their pronouncements are and how their inebriation makes them unaware of how ungodlike their behavior is I hate to break it to you, my fellow Africansâ€”continental and diasporicâ€”the world over. I make the case for this claim in what follows. But, first, a clarification. When I speak of God in this discussion, I refer solely to the supreme being of the two alien religious traditions that now dominate Africa and have so contorted Africans and warped our sensibilities that the two religions now constitute the origin and limits of what most Africans consider their world, its processes, their morality, their understanding of their world and how they think they ought to be in it. This is the God to whom they sacrifice themselves and all that pertain to them, their spaces, their ways through life, and what happens to them after their death. It is in their unceasing devotion to this God in expectation of significant improvements in their lives here and now that we find the best evidence that, if God exists, God must be playing the cruelest joke on pious, devout, God-intoxicated Africans. I chose my words carefully. Yes, Africans are God-intoxicated. Where do I even begin? For, as it is said, the fish rots from the head. I once listened on the radio to the late Ghanaian president, an eminent professor of law no less before he acceded to the presidency, proudly affirm, in response to complaints by some of his citizens that he had turned the presidential palace into a prayer camp something along the following lines: Yes, it is true. If I had my way, I would turn all of Ghana into a prayer camp. Why is it important that he was an academic before he became president? Either he did not understand the significance of the secular nature of Ghanaian state, constitutionally speaking, or he did not take it seriously. For had he taken it seriously, some respect for his nonbelieving citizens would have inclined him not to share with the world such private desires. Ultimately, he joined the lineage of African heads of state who have made themselves disciples, yes, disciples, of a Nigerian evangelist. Their discipleship was demonstrated, in part, by their going to spend nights at his church. To show his godliness and piety, the Nigerian President, Goodluck Jonathan, went to debase his officeâ€”he is at perfect liberty to abase himself, in his personâ€”by kneeling in full view of the world before another Nigerian man of God, again with absolutely no thought for what that would mean for his nonbelieving citizens in the context of a country whose constitution proclaims its secularism. In this case, too, the president is an ex-academic, a fishery biologist, no less. When the government of Jaafar el-Nimeiri in the old Sudan felt its grip on power waning as a result of popular protest, it quickly discovered how lucrative state-sponsored Muslim piety was and proceeded to impose Sharia law on the people of the country. And Omer el-Beshir could not find it in him to let up a bit on his religious intoxication to make the separation of South Sudan more onerous. Meanwhile, in Nigeria, since when the northern segment of the ruling class decided to force Sharia into the Nigerian Constitution, that part of the country has not known peace for any length of time. It got worse when a state governor from the region, who stands accused of marrying underage girls into his harem, thought he needed to impress God; he made the Sharia the law of his state, in clear contravention of elements of the Nigerian constitution. He quickly set about burnishing his credentials for paradise by having a few limbs hacked off a handful of unfortunate citizens trapped in his state. Others in the region quickly followed suit. As is usually the case in such situations, new guardians of the faith have emerged who insist that the state-inflected piety is not deep or genuine enough. They have been busy killing, maiming, and rendering hundreds of thousands of innocent Nigerians refugees in their own country. If the constraints of office do not allow our inebriated leaders to go the whole hog, the rot that they embody festers in the extreme in their constituents. So God-intoxicated are some African parents that they are willing to starve their own children to death on account of ridding them of their witchery powers. So widespread is the scourge of visiting

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unspeakable violence on children that there are now non-governmental outfits in Nigeria and Ghana dedicated to the cause of taking children in that would otherwise have been eliminated or severely abused by their parents and guardians because the Holy Spirit had outed them as witches or some other malevolent spirits. Our intellectuals, among other duties that they perform, go on interminably about the intrinsic religiosity of the African, how religion pervades the very air that we breathe in every nook and cranny of the continent. I doubt that any continent comes anywhere close to Africa in the multitudes of spirits that inhabit it and the preponderance of them are evil! God must have released all of the legion of the fallen spirits from heaven on condition that they all relocate to Africa and other places mostly populated by black folk.

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Chapter 7 : Apophatic theology - Wikipedia

Should a priest consult a doctor? Or Does faith in God have to rule out faith In Man?!" That it's illogical for a priest to call a doctor. " Tan"ou.

From my previous blog: Second century Church Father St. How do we get into these dark and difficult spaces, and how do we find our way back to intimacy with God? And, how do we continue to lead our congregations in worship with authenticity and Godly passion through challenging circumstances? To some extent probably all of us have been spiritually empty, dry, dull, devoid of joy, devoid of life, frustrated, unhappy, discontent, completely out-of-sorts with God, with our families, with our brothers and sisters, seemingly out-of-sorts with the entire world, and, more to it, even out of sorts with ourselves. When we find ourselves in this spiritual state, awakening like the prodigal son in the pig pen of existence, lost, hungry, discouraged, lonely, how do we get home? In Part One of this blog, I wrote about the first cause of spiritual emptiness, sins of commission and omission. The second great cause of spiritual emptiness, the focus of this blog, is a result of what happens to us, what comes upon us through little or no fault of our own. This category falls into the realm of theodicy. Theodicy is generally the study of the problem of suffering and evil in a world created by a personal, providential God of infinite goodness. While this tends to lean toward an academic study focused on proving the existence of God, theodicy becomes very practical indeed when stuff happens to you: Theodicy is terribly difficult and potentially deeply discouraging. This is perhaps the most difficult and challenging of all theological issues. All supposed answers seem facile and fall short of explaining how God, who is ultimate goodness, truth and beauty, can allow in his creation what seems to be evil, even unspeakable evil. Why are we left to suffer? How do we find meaning in that suffering? Many have attempted to find meaning in difficulties, Christians and non-Christians alike. Robert Barron calls them. First, there are some who ascribe suffering to divine retribution, or God expressing his anger against recalcitrant mankind. The problem with that perspective is found in the Book of Job. Job is, of course, the biblical archetype of the suffering human being who has undergone the worst kind of suffering and loss. How can God be reconciled with such evil and suffering? So, either you did something wrong to make God mad, or there really is no God. Both of these options are too easy and not helpful to the sufferer. And, frankly, they are just mistaken. Augustine argued that evil is sometimes a necessity to bring about a greater good, as in just war or the death of a martyr. Irenaeus seemed to argue that suffering is a necessary evil for the development of free moral agency in humans who are striving for godliness. Origen saw suffering as a kind of opportunity for schooling, or healing of the soul. First, God can never be construed as the cause of evil. Because God is love, through and through. God cannot will something evil, something that does not contribute to human flourishing. More to it, God is described as being itself. Therefore, God cannot be the cause of the non-being of evil. Rather, evil is a lack of good that ought to be there. So God cannot cause evil directly. Instead, God seems to permit evil to bring about a greater good. The free will that God gives all of us allows for the abuse of free will. That is sin, and sin has consequences. Why would God not bypass us and act directly to relieve suffering? Thomas Aquinas answered that the supreme cause God is pleased to involve us in his causality, giving us, as it were, the joy and privilege of sharing his work. In other words, God calls us to share in his loving care of others. Third, believers in the God of the Bible should not expect that they will be free of pain. Rather just the contrary is true. It is actually a bit of a puzzle that so many readers of the Bible seem to think that the love of God is incompatible with suffering, when all of the major figure in the Scriptures—Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, Samuel, David, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Peter, James, and John—all of them, go through periods of enormous suffering. And this puzzlement only deepens when we recall that Jesus, the central person in the Bible, is typically displayed to us nailed to a cross and in the throes of death. Suffering may be interpreted therefore as a participation in the salvific agony of Christ. Paul tells us in numerous places that we should participate with Christ in those sufferings. Fourth, suffering tends to give rise to love in others. As we suffer,

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others become awakened to the compassion in them. Our triumphs and joys are never utterly our own; they are for the sake of others. And the same is true of our tragedies. Making determinations on that very limited viewpoint would be like reading a sentence from a classic novel and determining from that one sentence the overall scope and meaning of the entire book. Foolish at best, but deadly and life-draining at worst. But do they shed light in a creative way on key aspects of it? I think they may. In the Book of Job we find that this man Job, again the archetype of the suffering human, has, in one fell swoop, lost all that counts toward human flourishing: It is all taken away. And, he knows he is a good and an innocent man. There he sits in spiritual, physical and emotional agony. How could God have possibly allowed this to happen? At the climax of the story, Job dismisses his friends and calls God into account. Why am I suffering in this way? Where were you when I laid the foundations of the world? Where were you when I told the sea where to stop? Where were you when I stored up the wind and the hail? God is the Lord of all of space and time, and has providential care for everything. Whatever we are experiencing is in the context of an infinitely wider and more complex created order and purpose. It would be like someone who knows no mathematics stumbling upon a complex astrophysics formula and determining its meaning. So, if you know no math, it would be impossible to determine the meaning of this formula, let alone arrogant to try. The awareness of the various contexts for our experiences is needed before we announce meaning or the lack thereof. Our suffering can be seen as ingredient in a much larger story, as a route of access to a deeper and richer life, both here and in the world to come. The Christian narrative is this: Beyond suffering and death lies resurrection and true life, divine life. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock[a] I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. The victorious Church is coming into existence, and the very gates of hell will not stand against it! But, for Peter especially, the story takes a quick turn: This shall never happen to you. You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul? In giving away the self in love, we find our true meaning and our true purpose. The solution to spiritual emptiness, to suffering and evil, and the key to the entire spiritual life is to give yourself away in love for the other, becoming a source of life for the other. That is the Christian solution. Do you know that God always has a mission for us, even in our lowest, emptiest times? In fact, it is an issue of spiritual metaphysics. Try to hold on to it, to grasp after it, and it will decrease. Only by giving away the divine life of God can it increase in us. In a very real sense, this is the entirety of the Christian life, being poured out in love, willing the good of the other as other. Augustine gave us the perspective that you are what you worship. You become what you adore. I will never be passionate enough, love God enough, or serve with enough fervor. But I know a man who identified with my humanity, who is just like me in every way. He has done for me what I cannot do for myself. He is the chief worshiper in the Kingdom, making intercession for us right now at the right hand of the Father.

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Chapter 8 : Process Theology: Guardian of the Oppressor or Goad to the Oppressed – Religion Online

Theodicy is the attempt to justify the goodness and providence of God in view of the reality of evil. Bloch is engaged in theodicy, too, but of a much different kind. His theodicy is humanistic.

Articles and book excerpts used in and referred to on Issues, Etc. Menuge from Christ and Culture in Dialogue Introduction Conflict between the demands of Christ and culture is neither new nor rare. Lewis put it, There are no ordinary people. You have never talked to a mere mortal. Nations, cultures, arts, civilizations - these are mortal, and their life is to ours as the life of a gnat. Carter recounts the example of a Colorado public school teacher who "was ordered by his superiors, on pain of disciplinary action, to remove his personal Bible from his desk where students might see it. Almost half a century ago, H. In particular, Niebuhr partly endorses the frequent charges against the "paradox" answer of classical Lutheranism that it encourages antinomianism and cultural conservatism, while significant advantages of the approach are overlooked. It has to be admitted, however, that part of the blame for the continued prevalence of such misunderstandings rests with Lutherans themselves: A two-fold defense of what Robert Benne has called the "paradoxical vision" 8 of Lutheranism will then be offered: That is, he thinks there is a range of typical answers to the question, but he does not claim they are exhaustive, or that they are mutually exclusive. Christ as living Lord is answering the question in the totality of history and life in a fashion which transcends the wisdom of all his interpreters yet employs their partial insights and their necessary conflicts. Definitions When considering a relationship, all hinges on how we define the relata, so before giving his typical answers, Niebuhr provides working definitions of "Christ" and "culture. Niebuhr claims that the essential character of Christ is given by His radical theocentrism, the fact that His love, hope and humility are all primarily directed to God the Father in heaven: Because he loves the Father with the perfection of human eros, therefore he loves men with the perfection of divine agape, since God is agape. Lutherans express this by saying that our faith has both a vertical dimension directed toward God and a horizontal dimension directed toward neighbor. Niebuhr realizes the importance of defining "culture" in a way which has universal applicability: So his definition is very abstract. Culture is the "artificial, secondary environment" which man superimposes on the natural. It comprises language, habits, ideas, beliefs, customs, social organization, inherited artifacts, technical processes, and values. The Options Using these definitions, Niebuhr now explores five answers which seem to have recurred through history, suggesting great representatives of each one, though he admits that none of these people fits neatly into just one of the categories. It thus presents Christ and culture as a radical either-or choice: Apparently the view has t scriptural support. For example, John says: Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him 1 John 2: In a similar vein, some would argue that the prince of this world is the devil, and therefore that loyalty to worldly authority is ultimately loyalty to the devil. According to Niebuhr, historical proponents of this sort of view have included Tertullian, Tolstoy, and the Mennonites. Niebuhr acknowledges the integrity of those following Christ against Culture in their courageous witness and sometimes martyrdom under evil governments, and in the social reforms they have thereby provoked. Indeed, without a continual separatist impetus, Christian faith quickly degenerates into a utilitarian device for the attainment of personal prosperity or public peace; and some imagined idol called by his name takes the place of Jesus Christ the Lord. It is impossible in practice to separate oneself from culture; as culture permeates our thinking and language, it is as much in us as it is around us. If Tolstoy, or the Amish, live apart from certain state institutions, or from mainstream technology and consumerism, they succeed only in establishing countercultures, not in becoming acultural. And although the separatist may insulate himself from some of the actual sins of prevailing culture, the original sin in his nature remains. The fact that monastic orders required so many rules and forms of discipline is a convincing testimony of the continuing presence of sin in the Christian. In the face of this, the separatist tendency to acknowledge grades of holiness can be maintained only by a works righteous ethic for Tolstoy, for example, Christ is primarily a new Lawgiver , thus eliminating the

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primacy of grace. It was for this reason that Luther claimed that monasticism was not merely unnecessary but, if it was chosen as a means to greater holiness, an institution of the devil. If Tolstoy were right, a Christian should pay no taxes, yet Christ himself says we must do it. Christ wants us to love our neighbors, but our neighbors are found in mainstream culture and not merely in cloisters and practical works of love will translate agape into culturally specific actions. In fact, Christ rebukes a kind of separatism in the Parable of the Good Samaritan: Yet the most devastating objection of all, Niebuhr thinks, comes from classic orthodox theology. This leads, however, to a purely spiritual understanding of Christ which denies His role in creation and His incarnation in history. Since we are to follow Christ in all things, and Christ has a cultural dimension, we must follow him in that dimension as well. In this way it is possible to affirm both Christ and culture and to deny any necessary opposition between the two. On the one hand they interpret culture through Christ, regarding those elements in it as most important which are most accordant with his work and person; on the other hand they understand Christ through culture, selecting from the Christian doctrine about him such points as seem to agree with what is best in civilization. Thus the early church had its Hellenizers and Judaizers of the Gospel and Gnostics who reconciled Christianity with their mystical philosophy. During the Enlightenment, Locke, Kant, and Jefferson all tried to isolate a scientifically and philosophically reasonable Christianity, and sometimes even excised elements of the faith which could be believed only on the basis of special revelation. Contemporary manifestations of accommodationism abound in the pronouncements of mainline Protestantism and the World Council of Churches. Niebuhr himself offers a substantial defense of the need for this emphasis in Christianity. Without emphasis on grace and the after-life, religion easily degenerates into a legalistic "self-reliant humanism. The accommodator of Christ to the views of the time erases the distinction between God and man by divinizing man or humanizing God. Lewis called "Christianity And": This calls to mind the worst excesses of mainline Protestantism which have, as Benne says, "looked for the world to set, the agenda for the, church. By seeking the will of God in the world, Christians are apt to mistake the prevailing Zeitgeist for the Holy Spirit. While there is much that is wrong about accommodations, I think an important distinction should be made. One should not compromise the fundamental message of Christianity, but in order to communicate that message to different cultures, one can translate culture-bound ideas to their equivalents in other cultures. Christ used cultural examples drawn from agrarian Palestine to express His parables. Paul altered his delivery and style depending on whether he was trying to reach Greeks, Romans, or Jews. Lewis claimed that his task was that of a translator, turning Christian doctrine into the vernacular of unscholarly people. The three relations considered are synthesis, paradox, and transformation. It is pointed out that culture cannot be all bad because it is founded on the nature created good by God, and that although nature and culture are fallen, they are still subject to God. The view emphasizes that good works are carried out in culture, yet are only made possible by grace, so that the kingdom of grace impinges on the kingdom of the world from above. Only through grace can we love our neighbor, yet only in culture can we act on that love. From this vision came the great ideas of general education and protective legislation for all citizens. He distinguished the natural law and cardinal virtues Prudence, Temperance, Justice, and Fortitude available to all mankind from the divine law, which includes the natural law but adds the superior motivation of the theological virtues Faith, Hope and Charity , which are available only to Christians through grace. Above all, Aquinas wanted to achieve a stable relationship between church and state that would allow the conservation of values and authority. There is also a continuum of authority between the earthly and heavenly realms, and a hierarchical organization in church and state offices. He recognizes that there is one king over the temporal and the eternal. He offers practical solutions for living the Christian life in culture. His picture not only theoretically, but as a matter of historical fact, has enriched cultural institutions such as education and government. No academic can with good faith completely repudiate Aquinas since he is one of the principal reasons the academic vocation exists. The approach is however beset by many problems. In its willingness to support. Synthesizing Christianity with the culture of the day may amount to cultural fossilization, and thus to "the absolutization of what is relative," 38 or cultural idolatry. In its emphasis on conservation of values and

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authority the approach may perpetuate dictatorships and prevent legislative reform. The hierarchical structure of church and state tends to create the false picture of grades of holiness. Luther rightly attacked the church for the evil and impossible attempt to make people believe things: In all this, the fundamental weakness is the failure to realize that sin will vitiate all institutions in both church and state and that attempts at reform are liable to great corruption. Christ and Culture in Paradox The paradox view differs from the preceding one by maintaining that while both Christ and culture claim our loyalty, the tension between them cannot be reconciled by any lasting synthesis. In what follows, I will use the term "realm," because "two kingdoms" makes the erroneous suggestion that there are two kings. Luther maintained that sin is universal and remains inside the Christian throughout his earthly life, thereby vitiating any attempt to set up a holy society on earth. There is a stark contrast between two realms: These two realms exist side by side in a paradoxical relation, never to be resolved in this life. To get a flavor for the paradox, we may compare the following passages from Luther. Such laws are needed, not because they will make the ungodly acceptable to God, but because they are a means of limiting the consequences of sin in this world. Christians, by contrast, do not need the Law or the sword as an incentive to act; this is not because temporal powers have no authority for them, but because, in normal circumstances, they freely want to follow this authority. However, it is an oversimplification to suppose that Christians are freed from the realm of the world. Thus we are simul justus et peccator simultaneously saint and sinner. What Luther insists on is that we are saved by grace, not works, yet because we also remain sinful in this life, we need the Law to curb our sin. Thus each Christian is a subject of two realms--two "kingdoms," but one king, Christ. Since one is saved by grace, not works, there are no grades of holiness, or any need to separate oneself from culture. In that sense, Christians can participate fully in what is best in culture: This freedom of the Christian is balanced by a respect for temporal law and secular government Rom. This balancing act will sometimes lead to paradox: It is completely realistic about the extent of human sin and the continuing need of law to control it. At the same time, Luther does not fall into separatism or self-righteousness, encouraging any honorable service to culture. While the Two Realms doctrine suggests to some a compartmentalization of faith and works, 49 Niebuhr is aware that this misunderstands the interrelations between the realms: Second, it leads to cultural conservatism: Along with this is the idea that Luther views the role of Law in a purely negative fashion as curb and mirror, the first two uses of the Law , but does not support its positive role as guide, the third use of the Law in improving society. It still affirms the universality of sin, but maintains that cultures can be converted.

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Chapter 9 : James' Thoughts and Musings: January

Apophatic theology, also known as negative theology, is a form of theological thinking and religious practice which attempts to approach God, the Divine, by negation, to speak only in terms of what may not be said about the perfect goodness that is God.

Biography[edit] Weil with her father Weil at age Her mother was Saolomea Weil and her father Bernard was a medical doctor. Weil was a healthy baby for her first six months, until she had a severe attack of appendicitis thereafter she struggled with poor health throughout her life. Their parents were agnostic and fairly affluent, raising their children in an attentive and supportive atmosphere. According to several Weil scholars, including Eva Fogelman and Robert Coles , this experience may have been related to the exceptionally strong altruism displayed throughout her life. She later learned Sanskrit after reading the Bhagavad Gita. Like the Renaissance thinker Pico della Mirandola , her interests in other religions were universal and she attempted to understand each religious tradition as an expression of transcendent wisdom. In she was successful in gaining admission. She finished first in the exam for the certificate of "General Philosophy and Logic"; Simone de Beauvoir finished second. She was called the "Red virgin", [25] and even "The Martian" by her admired mentor. Political activism[edit] Leon Trotsky. Weil was one of the rare few who appeared to hold her own with the Red Army founder in a face-to-face debate. In , when she was only six years old, she refused sugar in solidarity with the troops entrenched along the Western Front. In , at 10 years of age, she declared herself a Bolshevik. At this time, she was a Marxist , pacifist , and trade unionist. While teaching in Le Puy, she became involved in local political activity, supporting the unemployed and striking workers despite criticism. Weil had never formally joined the Communist party, and in her twenties she became increasingly critical of Marxism. When she returned to France, her political friends in France dismissed her fears, thinking Germany would continue to be controlled by the centrists or those to the left. After Hitler rose to power in , Weil spent much of her time trying to help German communists fleeing his regime. This work criticised popular Marxist thought and gave a pessimistic account of the limits of both capitalism and socialism. Trotsky himself personally responded to several of her articles, attacking both her ideas and her as a person. The following year, she took a month leave of absence from her teaching position to work incognito as a labourer in two factories, one owned by Renault , believing that this experience would allow her to connect with the working class. In , she resumed teaching and donated most of her income to political causes and charitable endeavours. In , despite her professed pacifism , she travelled to the Spanish Civil War on the Republican side, and joined the anarchist columns of Buenaventura Durruti. She even took a rifle, but was expelled from combat line by her comrades, as she was extremely short-sighted, and they feared Simone shooting one of them. She hit a pot of boiling liquid because of her short-sightedness, had noticeable burns, and her family came to Spain to bring her back home. During her stay in the Aragon front, she sent some chronicles to the French publication: Gorkin refused, saying she would almost certainly be sacrificing herself for nothing, as it would be most unlikely she could pass as a Spaniard. Weil replied that she had "every right" [33] to sacrifice herself if she chose, but after arguing for more than an hour, she was unable to convince Gorkin to give her the assignment. The unit was part of the French-speaking section of the anarchist militia. From seeing her practice on makeshift shooting ranges, her comrades saw she was a very poor shot and tried to avoid taking her on missions, though she did sometimes insist. After being with the group for a few weeks, she burnt herself over a cooking fire. She was forced to leave the unit, and was met by her parents who had followed her to Spain. They helped her leave the country, to recuperate in Assisi. Weil became attracted to the Christian faith beginning in , the first of three pivotal experiences for her being when she was moved by the beauty of villagers singing hymns during an outdoor service that she stumbled across during a holiday to Portugal. She was led to pray for the first time in her life as Cunningham Below the town is the beautiful church and convent of San Damiano where Saint Clare once lived. Near that spot is the place purported to be where Saint

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Francis composed the larger part of his "Canticle of Brother Sun". Below the town in the valley is the ugliest church in the entire environs: It was in that tiny chapel that the great mystic Simone Weil first felt compelled to kneel down and pray. She was attracted to Roman Catholicism , but declined to be baptized , preferring to remain outside due to "the love of those things that are outside Christianity". Around this time, she met the French Catholic author Gustave Thibon , who later edited some of her work. Weil did not limit her curiosity to Christianity. She was keenly interested in other religious traditions—especially the Greek and Egyptian mysteries ; Hinduism especially the Upanishads and the Bhagavad Gita ; and Mahayana Buddhism. She believed that all these and other traditions contained elements of genuine revelation, [47] writing that: Greece, Egypt, ancient India, the beauty of the world, the pure and authentic reflection of this beauty in art and science I think I might even say more. Each religion is alone true, that is to say, that at the moment we are thinking of it we must bring as much attention to bear on it as if there were nothing else A "synthesis" of religion implies a lower quality of attention. She had been reluctant to leave France , but agreed to do so as she wanted to see her parents to safety and knew they would not leave without her. She was also encouraged by the fact that it would be relatively easy for her to reach Britain from the United States, where she could join the French Resistance. She had hopes of being sent back to France as a covert agent. The Need for Roots. In May , plans were underway to send her to Thame Park in Oxfordshire for training, but were cancelled soon after, as her failing health became known. However, she refused special treatment because of her long-standing political idealism and her detachment from material things. Instead, she limited her food intake to what she believed residents of German-occupied France ate. She most likely ate even less, as she refused food on most occasions. Her condition quickly deteriorated, and she was moved to a sanatorium in Ashford, Kent , England. Some claim that her refusal to eat came from her desire to express some form of solidarity toward the victims of the war. Rees sums up by saying: