

Chapter 1 : Search results for `H. Grundmann Christoffer` - PhilPapers

In religion, and even in religious philosophy, reasoned arguments are ultimately traced back to some basic faith in God, gods, or religious principles which have been discovered in some revelation. A separation between the sacred and the profane is something else lacking in philosophy.

The Field and its Significance The philosophical exploration of religious beliefs and practices is evident in the earliest recorded philosophy, east and west. This intermingling of philosophical inquiry with religious themes and the broader enterprises of philosophy e. Only gradually do we find texts devoted exclusively to religious themes. Cudworth and his Cambridge University colleague Henry More produced philosophical work with a specific focus on religion and so, if one insisted on dating the beginning of philosophy of religion as a field, there are good reasons for claiming that it began gradually in the mid- 17th century see Taliaferro Today philosophy of religion is a robust, intensely active area of philosophy. Almost without exception, any introduction to philosophy text in the Anglophone world includes some philosophy of religion. The importance of philosophy of religion is chiefly due to its subject matter: A philosophical exploration of these topics involves fundamental questions about our place in the cosmos and about our relationship to what may transcend the cosmos. Such philosophical work requires an investigation into the nature and limit of human thought. Alongside these complex, ambitious projects, philosophy of religion has at least three factors that contribute to its importance for the overall enterprise of philosophy. Philosophy of religion addresses embedded social and personal practices. Philosophy of religion is therefore relevant to practical concerns; its subject matter is not all abstract theory. A chief point of reference in much philosophy of religion is the shape and content of living traditions. In this way, philosophy of religion may be informed by the other disciplines that study religious life. Another reason behind the importance of the field is its breadth. There are few areas of philosophy that are shorn of religious implications. Religious traditions are so comprehensive and all-encompassing in their claims that almost every domain of philosophy may be drawn upon in the philosophical investigation of their coherence, justification, and value. A third reason is historical. Most philosophers throughout the history of ideas, east and west, have addressed religious topics. One cannot undertake a credible history of philosophy without taking philosophy of religion seriously. While this field is vital for philosophy, philosophy of religion may also make a pivotal contribution to religious studies and theology. Religious studies often involve important methodological assumptions about history and about the nature and limits of religious experience. These invite philosophical assessment and debate. Theology may also benefit from philosophy of religion in at least two areas. Historically, theology has often drawn upon, or been influenced by, philosophy. Platonism and Aristotelianism have had a major influence on the articulation of classical Christian doctrine, and in the modern era theologians have often drawn on work by philosophers from Hegel to Heidegger and Derrida. The evaluation has at times been highly critical and dismissive, but there are abundant periods in the history of ideas when philosophy has positively contributed to the flourishing of religious life. This constructive interplay is not limited to the west. The role of philosophy in distinctive Buddhist views of knowledge and the self has been of great importance. At the beginning of the 21st century, a more general rationale for philosophy of religion should be cited: Philosophers of religion now often seek out common as well as distinguishing features of religious belief and practice. This study can enhance communication between traditions, and between religions and secular institutions. The Meaningfulness of Religious Language A significant amount of work on the meaningfulness of religious language was carried out in the medieval period, with major contributions made by Maimonides “ , Thomas Aquinas “ , Duns Scotus “ , and William of Ockham “ In the modern era, the greatest concentration on religious language has taken place in response to logical positivism and to the latter work of Wittgenstein “ This section and the next highlights these two more recent movements. Logical positivism promoted an empiricist principle of meaning which was deemed lethal for religious belief. The following empiricist principle is representative: The stronger version of positivism is that claims about the world must be verifiable at least in principle. Both the weaker view with its more open ended reference to evidence and the strict view in principle confirmation

delimit meaningful discourse about the world. Ostensibly factual claims that have no implications for our empirical experience are empty of content. In line with this form of positivism, A. Ayer and others claimed that religious beliefs were meaningless. How might one empirically confirm that God is omnipresent or loving or that Krishna is an avatar of Vishnu? In an important debate in the 1950s and 60s, philosophical arguments about God were likened to debates about the existence and habits of an unobservable gardener, based on a parable by John Wisdom in 1956. The idea of a gardener who is not just invisible but who also cannot be detected by any sensory faculty seemed nonsense. It seemed like nonsense because they said there was no difference between an imperceptible gardener and no gardener at all. Using this garden analogy and others crafted with the same design, Antony Flew in his essay in Mitchell made the case that religious claims do not pass the empirical test of meaning. The field of philosophy of religion in the 1950s and 60s was largely an intellectual battlefield where the debates centered on whether religious beliefs were meaningful or conceptually absurd. Empirical verificationism is by no means dead. Some critics of the belief in an incorporeal God continue to advance the same critique as that of Flew and Ayer, albeit with further refinements. Michael Martin and Kai Nielsen are representatives of this approach. And yet despite these efforts, empiricist challenges to the meaningfulness of religious belief are now deemed less impressive than they once were. In the history of the debate over positivism, the most radical charge was that positivism is self-refuting. The empiricist criterion of meaning itself does not seem to be a statement that expresses the formal relation of ideas, nor does it appear to be empirically verifiable. How might one empirically verify the principle? At best, the principle of verification seems to be a recommendation as to how to describe those statements that positivists are prepared to accept as meaningful. But then, how might a dispute about which other statements are meaningful be settled in a non-arbitrary fashion? If the positivist principle is tightened up too far, it seems to threaten various propositions that at least appear to be highly respectable, such as scientific claims about physical processes and events that are not publicly observable. For example, what are we to think of states of the universe prior to all observation of physical strata of the cosmos that cannot be observed directly or indirectly but only inferred as part of an overriding scientific theory? Or what about the mental states of other persons, which may ordinarily be reliably judged, but which, some argue, are under-determined by external, public observation? Also worrisome was the wholesale rejection by positivists of ethics as a cognitive, normative practice. The dismissal of ethics as non-cognitive had some embarrassing ad hominem force against an empiricist like Ayer, who regarded ethical claims as lacking any truth value and yet at the same time he construed empirical knowledge in terms of having the right to certain beliefs. Can an ethics of belief be preserved if one dispenses with the normativity of ethics? The strict empiricist account of meaning was also charged as meaningless on the grounds that there is no coherent, clear, basic level of experience with which to test propositional claims. A mystic might well claim to experience the unity of a timeless spirit everywhere present. Ayer allowed that in principle mystical experience might give meaning to religious terms. Those who concede this appeared to be on a slippery slope leading from empirical verificationism to mystical verificationism.

Alston A growing number of philosophers in the 1950s and 60s were led to conclude that the empiricist challenge was not decisive. Critical assessments of positivism can be found in work by, among others, Alvin Plantinga, Richard Swinburne, and John Foster. One of the most sustained lessons from the encounter between positivism and the philosophy of religion is the importance of assessing the meaning of individual beliefs in comprehensive terms. Carl Hempel developed the following critique of positivism, pointing the way to a more comprehensive analysis of the meaning of ostensible propositional claims. But no matter how one might reasonably delimit the class of sentences qualified to introduce empirically significant terms, this new approach [by the positivists] seems to me to lead to the realization that cognitive significance cannot well be construed as a characteristic of individual sentences, but only of more or less comprehensive systems of sentences corresponding roughly to scientific theories. A closer study of this point suggests strongly that the idea of cognitive significance, with its suggestion of a sharp distinction between significant and non-significant sentences or systems of such, has lost its promise and fertility and that it had better be replaced by certain concepts which admit of differences in degree, such as the formal simplicity of a system; its explanatory and predictive power; and its degree of conformation relative to the available evidence.

The analysis and theoretical reconstruction of these concepts seems to offer the most promising way of advancing further the clarification of the issues implicit in the idea of cognitive significance. Hempel, If Hempel is right, the project initiated by Ayer had to be qualified, taking into account larger theoretical frameworks. Religious claims could not be ruled out at the start but should be allowed a hearing with competing views of cognitive significance. Ayer himself later conceded that the positivist account of meaning was unsatisfactory. With the retreat of positivism in the 1950s, philosophers of religion re-introduced concepts of God, competing views of the sacred, and the like, which were backed by arguments that appealed not to narrow scientific confirmation but to broad considerations of coherence, breadth of explanation, simplicity, religious experience, and other factors. But before turning to this material, it is important to consider a debate within philosophy of religion that was largely inspired by the Austrian philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein. Religious Forms of Life and Practices Wittgenstein launched an attack on what has been called the picture theory of meaning, according to which statements may be judged true or false depending upon whether reality matches the picture represented by the belief. It gives rise to insoluble philosophical problems and it misses the whole point of having religious beliefs, which is that the meaning is to be found in the life in which they are employed. By shifting attention away from the referential meaning of words to their use, Wittgenstein promoted the idea that we should attend to what he called forms of life. As this move was applied to religious matters, a number of philosophers either denied or at least played down the extent to which religious forms of life involve metaphysical claims. Phillips have all promoted this approach to religion. It may be considered non-realist in the sense that it does not treat religious beliefs as straightforward metaphysical claims that can be adjudicated philosophically as either true or false concerning an objective reality. By their lights, the traditional metaphysics of theism got what it deserved when it came under attack in the mid-twentieth century by positivists. This Wittgensteinian challenge, then, appears to place in check much of the way philosophers in the west have approached religion. When, for example, Descartes, Locke, Leibniz, Berkeley, and Hume argued for and against the justification of belief in God, metaphysics was at the forefront. The same preoccupation with the truth or falsehood of religious belief is also central to ancient and medieval philosophical reflection about the Divine. At least two reasons may support recent non-realism. First, it has some credibility based on the sociology of religion. Religion seems pre-eminently to be focused upon how we live. A second reason that might be offered is that the classical and contemporary arguments for specific views of God have seemed unsuccessful to many philosophers though not to all, as observed in section 4. Non-realist views have their critics from the vantage point both of atheists such as Michael Martin and theists such as Roger Trigg. By way of a preliminary response it may be pointed out that even if a non-realist approach is adopted this would not mean altogether jettisoning the more traditional approach to religious beliefs. If one of the reasons advanced on behalf of non-realism is that the traditional project fails, then ongoing philosophy of religion will still require investigating to determine whether in fact the tradition does fail. As John Dewey once observed, philosophical ideas not only never die, they never fade away. A more substantial reply to Wittgensteinian non-realism has been the charge that it does not preserve but instead undermines the very intelligibility of religious practice. Let us concede that religious practice is antecedent to philosophical theories that justify the practice—a concession not shared by all.

Chapter 2 : Spinoza: Theological-Political Treatise - Benedictus de Spinoza - Google Books

Philosophy of Religion is rational thought about religious issues and concerns without a presumption of the existence of a deity or reliance on acts of faith. Philosophers examine the nature of religion and religious beliefs.

The Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom disestablished the Church, although it retained some lands which had been purchased with public monies. As an adult, Washington served as a member of the vestry lay council for his local parish. Office-holding qualifications at all levels—including the House of Burgesses, to which Washington was elected in 1774—required affiliation with the current state religion and an undertaking that one would neither express dissent nor do anything that did not conform to church doctrine. At the library of the New-York Historical Society, some manuscripts containing a leaf from the church record of Pohick were available to Benson Lossing, an American historian, which he included in his *Field Book of the Revolution*; the leaf contained the following signed oath, required to qualify individuals as vestrymen: The Vestry in Virginia was the governing body of each church. Lee Massey, his pastor wrote, "I never knew so constant an attendant in church as Washington. Biographer Paul Leicester Ford wrote: His daily "where and how my time is spent" tells how often he attended church, and in the year he went sixteen times, and in he went fourteen. Vernon; his second parish in Alexandria was nine miles away. In the seven Sundays during the First Continental Congress in Philadelphia, he went to church on three, attending Anglican, Quaker, and Catholic services. After the religious ceremony and Pulpit service Washington, along with the greater congregation, would exit the church, leaving wife Martha with the communicants to receive communion. In one definitive case a Pastor James Abercrombie of St. He later admitted that the remark was intended for the President, and indeed Washington had assumed the remark was aimed at him. Washington later discussed the incident with a Congressman at a dinner and related to him that he had honored the preacher for his integrity and candour, and that he had never considered that his example was of any influence. Boller suggests that Washington, a man who had help to promote a major war, refrained from receiving communion from the idea that his heart and mind were not in "a proper condition to receive the sacrament," and that Washington simply did not want to indulge in something he regarded to be an act of hypocrisy on his part. As an infant he was baptized in April. The school takes no stance on whether the baptism of Washington actually took place[citation needed]. The letter was in the handwriting of an aide, and the leading biographers, including Chernow, Henriques and Freeman, say that the aide wrote it, not Washington.: These will make you a greater and happier people than you are. Congress will do every thing they can to assist you in this wise intention; and to tie the knot of friendship and union so fast, that nothing shall ever be able to loose it. Of all the dispositions and habits, which lead to political prosperity, Religion and Morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of Patriotism, who should labor to subvert these great pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of the duties of Men and Citizens. The mere Politician, equally with the pious man, ought to respect and to cherish them. A volume could not trace all their connexions with private and public felicity. Let it simply be asked, Where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation desert the oaths, which are the instruments of investigation in Courts of Justice? And let us with caution indulge the supposition, that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect, that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle. It is substantially true, that virtue or morality is a necessary spring of popular government. The rule, indeed, extends with more or less force to every species of free government. Who, that is a sincere friend to it, can look with indifference upon attempts to shake the foundation of the fabric? Senate Historical Office, and Mount Vernon have said there is no evidence to support that claim. The first authors to state that Washington added the words were Rufus Wilmot Griswold in [37] and Washington Irving in Sparks quotes orders given by General Washington to his Army requiring them to attend to their religious duties and "to implore the blessing of Heaven" upon the American Army. The proclamation was sent to the governors of the states, and assigns the day upon which "the people of these States" devote themselves in service to "that great and glorious Being who is the beneficent author of

all the good that was, that is, or that will be. On some occasions, such as during the Constitutional Convention, he attended Presbyterian, Catholic, and Friends Sunday services. Washington was an early supporter of religious toleration and freedom of religion. In , he ordered that his troops not show anti-Catholic sentiments by burning the pope in effigy on Guy Fawkes Night. Eyewitness accounts[edit] Eyewitness accounts exist of Washington engaging in morning devotions. In New York and Philadelphia he never omitted attendance at church in the morning, unless detained by indisposition [sickness]. His life, his writings, prove that he was a Christian. He was not one of those who act or pray, that they may be seen of men. Rush tells me that he had it from Asa Green that when the clergy addressed Genl. Washington on his departure from the govmt, it was observed in their consultation that he had never on any occasion said a word to the public which showed a belief in the Xn religion and they thot they should so pen their address as to force him at length to declare publicly whether he was a Christian or not. However he observed the old fox was too cunning for them. He answered every article of their address particularly except that, which he passed over without notice. Rush observes he never did say a word on the subject in any of his public papers except in his valedictory letter to the Governors of the states when he resigned his commission in the army, wherein he speaks of the benign influence of the Christian religion. Washington believed no more of that system than he himself did. In the s, abolitionist newspapers printed interviews with and testimony of Oney Judge , a slave who escaped from the Washingtons in One such article, from the Granite Freeman , stated: In another case, the Rev. Card-playing and wine-drinking were the business at his parties, and he had more of such company Sundays than on any other day. As noted above, some of his contemporaries called him a deist. Debate continues to this day regarding whether he is best categorized as a deist or as a Christian, and some writers have introduced other terms to describe a blending of the two. Deism was an influential worldview during his lifetime. One document he signed but did not write did say to the Delaware Indian chiefs that learning the "religion of Jesus Christ" is the most important thing they can do. In actuality Washington used "God" times in his personal and public writings. Some instances are serious expressions about God and especially His Providence, a common theme among Deists. Washington used words such as "Grand Architect" and "Providence" that were popular among deists. Washington had an unquestioning faith in Providence and, as we have seen, he voiced this faith publicly on numerous occasions. That this was no mere rhetorical flourish on his part, designed for public consumption, is apparent from his constant allusions to Providence in his personal letters. Holmes also distinguishes between strict deists and orthodox Christians by their church attendance , participation in religious rites such as baptism, Holy Communion, and confirmation , the use of religious language, and opinions of contemporary family, friends, clergy, and acquaintances. Regarding these specific parameters, Holmes describes Washington as a Christian deist due to his religious behavior falling somewhere between that of an orthodox Christian and a strict deist. Although Washington was clearly not a communicant, was infrequent in his Church attendance, and did not deem it necessary to participate in religious rites, Holmes labels him as a Christian deist due to his references of God, which resemble strict deistic terminology yet add a Christian dimension of mercy and divine nature. Historian and Washington specialist Frank E. The qualities attributed to Providence by Washington reveal that he conceived of Providence as an "Omnipotent," "benign," and "beneficent" Being that by "invisible workings" in "Infinite Wisdom" dispensed justice in the affairs of mankind. Although he never once used the word "Deist" in his voluminous writings, he often mentioned religion, Christianity, and the Gospel Historians ought no longer be permitted to do the legerdemain of turning Washington into a Deist even if they found it necessary and acceptable to do so in the past. Historian and Philosopher Michael Novak maintains that Washington could not have been strictly a Deist, but was a Christian: What we did prove, and quite conclusively, is that Washington cannot be called a Deistâ€”at least, not in a sense that excludes his being Christian. Although he did most often address God in the proper names a Deist might useâ€”such as "Author of all the good that was, that is, or that will be" and "Disposer of all human events"â€”the actions that Washington expected God to perform, as expressed both in his official public prayers whether as general or as president and in his private prayers as recorded, are the sorts of actions only the God of the Bible performs: Many persons at the end of the 18th century were both Christians and Deists. But it cannot be said, in the simpleminded sense in which historians have become accustomed to putting it,

that Washington was merely a Deist, or even that the God to whom he prayed was expected to behave like a Deist God at all. So, he was clearly Christian He was quite intensely religious, because even though he uses the word Providence, he constantly sees Providence as an active force in life, particularly in American life. I mean, every single victory in war he credits to Providence. The miracle of the Constitutional Convention he credits to Providence. The creation of the federal government and the prosperity of the early republic, he credits to Providence Unfortunately, this particular issue has become very very politicized. However, unlike the deists, the theological rationalists believed in the efficacy of prayer to God. Thomas Davis, rector of Christ Church, Alexandria, officiating.

Chapter 3 : Idealism, materialism and consciousness : askphilosophy

Philosophy of religion is the philosophical study of the meaning and nature of religion. It includes the analyses of religious concepts, beliefs, terms, arguments, and practices of religious adherents.

Either the universe had a beginning or it did not. If it did, either that beginning was caused or it was not caused. If it was caused, either the cause was personal or it was impersonal. Based on these dilemmas, the argument can be put in the following logical form: Whatever begins to exist has a cause of its existence. The universe began to exist. Therefore, the universe has some kind of cause of its existence. The cause of the universe is either an impersonal cause or a personal one. The cause of the universe is not impersonal. Therefore, the cause of the universe is a personal one, which we call God. This version of the cosmological argument was bolstered by work in astrophysics and cosmology in the late twentieth century. On one interpretation of the standard Big Bang cosmological model, the time-space universe sprang into existence ex nihilo approximately 13.7 billion years ago. Such a beginning is best explained, argue kalam defenders, by a non-temporal, non-spatial, personal, transcendent cause—namely God. The claim that the universe began to exist is also argued philosophically in at least two ways. First, it is argued that an actual infinite set of events cannot exist, for actual infinities lead to metaphysical absurdities. Since an infinite temporal regress of events is an actual infinite set of events, such a regress is metaphysically impossible. So the past cannot be infinite; the universe must have had a temporal beginning. A second approach begins by arguing that an infinite series of events cannot be formed by successive addition one member being added to another. The reason why is that, when adding finite numbers one after the other, the set of numbers will always be finite. The addition of yet another finite number, ad infinitum, will never lead to an actual infinite. Since the past is a series of temporal events formed by successive addition, the past could not be actually infinite in duration. Nor will the future be so. The universe must have had a beginning. Many objections have been raised against the kalam argument, both scientific and philosophical, including that there are other cosmological models of the universe besides the Big Bang in which the universe is understood to be eternal, such as various multi-verse theories. Philosophical rebuttals marshaled against the kalam argument include the utilization of set theory and mathematical systems which employ actual infinite sets. Teleological Arguments Teleological arguments in the East go back as far as C. In the West, Plato, Aristotle, and the Stoics offered arguments for a directing intelligence of the world given the order found within it. There is an assortment of teleological arguments, but a common theme among them is the claim that certain characteristics of the natural world reflect design, purpose, and intelligence. These features of the natural world are then used as evidence for an intelligent, intentional designer of the world. The teleological argument has been articulated and defended at various times and places throughout history, but its zenith was in the early nineteenth century with perhaps its most ardent defender: In his book, *Natural Theology*, Paley offers an argument from analogy: Artifacts such as a watch, with their means to ends configurations, are the products of human design. The works of nature, such as the human hand, resemble artifacts. Thus the works of nature are probably the products of design. Furthermore, the works of nature are much more in number and far greater in complexity. Therefore, the works of nature were probably the products of a grand designer—one much more powerful and intelligent than a human designer. Those offered by David Hume—in his *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion* are often taken to be archetype refutations of traditional design arguments. Among them are that the analogy between the works of nature and human artifacts is not particularly strong; that even if we could infer a grand designer of the universe, this designer turns out to be something less than the God of the theistic religions especially given the great amount of evil in the world; and that just because a universe has the appearance of design, it does not follow that it is in fact designed; such an event could have occurred through natural, chance events. A more recent version of the design argument is based on the apparent fine-tuning of the cosmos. Fine-tuning arguments, whose current leading defender is Robin Collins, include the claims that the laws of nature, the constants of physics, and the initial conditions of the universe are finely tuned for conscious life. Consider the following three: While each of the individual calculations of such constants may not be fully accurate, it is argued that the significant

number of them, coupled with their independence from one other, provides evidence of their being intentionally established with conscious life in mind. Objections to fine-tuning arguments are multifarious. According to an anthropic principle objection, if the laws of nature and physical constants would have varied to any significant degree, there would be no conscious observers such as ourselves. Given that such observers do exist, it should not be surprising that the laws and constants are just as they are. One way of accounting for such observers is the many-worlds hypothesis. In this view, there exist a large number of universes, perhaps an infinite number of them. Most of these universes include life-prohibiting parameters, but at least a minimal number of them would probably include life-permitting ones. It should not be surprising that one of them, ours, for example, is life-permitting. Much of the current fine-tuning discussion turns on the plausibility of the many-worlds hypothesis and the anthropic principle. There are other versions of the teleological argument that have also been proposed which focus not on fundamental parameters of the cosmos but on different aspects of living organisms—“including their emergence, alleged irreducibly complex systems within living organisms, information intrinsic within DNA, and the rise of consciousness”—in an attempt to demonstrate intelligent, intentional qualities in the world. If successful, the cosmological argument only provides evidence for a transcendent first cause of the universe, nothing more; at best, the teleological argument provides evidence for a purposive, rational designer of the universe, nothing more; and so on. Natural theologians maintain, however, that the central aim of these arguments is not to offer full-blown proofs of any particular deity, but rather to provide evidence or warrant for belief in a grand designer, or creator, or moral lawgiver. Some natural theologians argue that it is best to combine the various arguments in order to provide a cumulative case for a broad form of theism. Taken together, these natural theologians argue, the classical arguments offer a picture of a deity not unlike the God of the theistic religious traditions and even if this approach does not prove the existence of any particular deity, it does nonetheless lend support to theism over naturalism which, as used here, is the view that natural entities have only natural causes, and that the world is fully describable by the physical sciences. Along with arguments for the existence of God, there are also a number of reasons one might have for denying the existence of God. If the burden is on the theist to provide highly convincing evidences or reasons that would warrant his or her believing that God exists, in the absence of such evidences and reasons disbelief is justified. Another reason one might have for not believing that God exists is that science conflicts with theistic beliefs and, given the great success of the scientific enterprise, it should have the last word on the matter. Since science has regularly rebuffed religious claims in the past, we should expect the claims of religion to eventually become extinct. A third possible reason for denying the existence of God is that the very concept of God is incoherent. And a fourth reason one might have is that the existence of God conflicts with various features of the natural world, such as evil, pain, and suffering. The Challenge of Science Over the last several hundred years there has been tremendous growth in scientific understanding of the world in such fields as biology, astronomy, physics, and geology. These advances have had considerable influence on religious belief. When religious texts, such as the Bible, have been in conflict with science, the latter has generally been the winner in the debate ; religious beliefs have commonly given way to the power of the scientific method. It has seemed to some that modern science will be able to explain all of the fundamental questions of life with no remainder. Given the advances of science and the retreat of religious beliefs, many in the latter half of the twentieth century agreed with the general Freudian view that a new era was on the horizon in which the infantile illusions, or perhaps delusions, of religion would soon go the way of the ancient Greek and Roman gods. With the onset of the twenty-first century, however, a new narrative has emerged. Religion has not fallen into oblivion, as many anticipated; in fact, religious belief is on the rise. Many factors account for this, including challenges to psychological and sociological theories which hold belief in God to be pathological or neurotic. In recent decades these theories have themselves been challenged by medical and psychological research, being understood by many to be theories designed primarily to destroy belief in God. Another important factor is the increase in the number of believing and outspoken scientists, such as Francis Collins, the director of the human genome project. But despite this orchestrated opposition arguing the falsity and incoherence of theism, it has proved rather resilient. Indeed, the twenty-first century is reflecting a renewed interest in philosophical theism. The Coherence of Theism Philosophical challenges to theism have

also included the claim that the very concept of God makes no sense—that the attributes ascribed to God are logically incoherent either individually or collectively. There are first-rate philosophers today who argue that theism is coherent and others of equal stature who argue that theism is incoherent. Much of the criticism of the concept of theism has focused on God as understood in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, but it is also relevant to the theistic elements found within Mahayana Buddhism, Hinduism, Confucianism, and certain forms of African and Native American religions. The question of whether theism is coherent is an important one, for if there is reason to believe that theism is incoherent, theistic belief is in an important sense undermined. The logical consistency of each of the divine attributes of classical theism has been challenged by both adherents and non-adherents of theism. Consider the divine attribute of omniscience. If God knows what you will freely do tomorrow, then it is the case now that you will indeed do that tomorrow. But how can you be free not to do that thing tomorrow if it is true now that you will in fact freely do that thing tomorrow? There is a vast array of replies to this puzzle, but some philosophers conclude that omniscience is incompatible with future free action and that, since there is future free action, God—if God exists—is not omniscient. Another objection to the coherence of theism has to do with the divine attribute of omnipotence and is referred to as the stone paradox. An omnipotent being, as traditionally understood, is a being who can bring about anything. So, an omnipotent being could create a stone that was too heavy for such a being to lift. But if he could not lift the stone, he would not be omnipotent, and if he could not make such a stone, he would not be omnipotent. Hence, no such being exists. A number of replies have been offered to this puzzle, but some philosophers conclude that the notion of omnipotence as traditionally defined is incoherent and must be redefined if the concept of God is to remain a plausible one. Arguments for the incoherence of theism have been offered for each of the divine attributes. While there have been many challenges to the classical attributes of God, there are also contemporary philosophers and theologians who have defended each of them as traditionally understood. There is much lively discussion currently underway by those defending both the classical and neo-classical views of God. But not all theistic philosophers and theologians have believed that the truths of religious beliefs can be or even should be demonstrated or rationally justified. Problems of Evil and Suffering

a. Logical Problems Perhaps the most compelling and noteworthy argument against theism is what is referred to as the problem of evil. Philosophers of the East and the West have long recognized that difficulties arise for one who affirms both the existence of an omnipotent and omnibenevolent God and the reality of evil. David Hume, quoting the ancient Greek thinker Epicurus —

B. Is he [God] willing to prevent evil, but not able? Is he able, but not willing? Is he both able and willing?

Chapter 4 : What is Philosophy of Religion

The Relationship Between Morality and Religion In the Dalai Lama and John Pope II Perspective The complexities on the issue of the relationship between religion and morality is intriguing in the sense that there is no right or wrong answer, but merely your own intrinsic belief.

What is Philosophy of Religion? Philosophy is the most critical and comprehensive thought process developed by human beings. It is quite different from religion in that where Philosophy is both critical and comprehensive, Religion is comprehensive but not necessarily critical. Religion attempts to offer a view of all of life and the universe and to offer answers to most, if not all, of the most basic and important questions which occur to humans all over the planet. The answers offered by Religion are not often subject to the careful scrutiny of reason and logic. Indeed many religious beliefs defy logic and seem to be unreasonable. Religion has its basis in belief. Philosophy, on the other hand, is a critic of belief and belief systems. Philosophy subjects what some would be satisfied in believing to severe examination. Philosophy looks for rational explications and justifications for beliefs. Philosophy has its basis in reason. Theology deals with thinking about religious beliefs in a rational manner but it presumes faith. Theologians employ reason to make their beliefs appear more clearly and to wherever possible have beliefs satisfy the dictates of reason. Theologians begin with a set of beliefs as foundational or fundamental and in some sense not subject to possible disbelief or to truly critical analysis. Philosophers examine, indeed they look for, all assumptions and suppositions of any system of thought or belief. For philosophers there are no ideas to be accepted on faith. Philosophy of Religion is rational thought about religious issues and concerns without a presumption of the existence of a deity or reliance on acts of faith. Philosophers examine the nature of religion and religious beliefs. Philosophers in the West have focused on ideas related to the existence and nature of the deity because that idea is central to the religions of the West. Western Philosophy of Religion has centered on arguments or proofs for the existence of god and explications of apparent inconsistencies in the description of the nature of god. In the last century philosophers around the world have refocused their examinations onto the nature of religious beliefs, religious language and the religious mindset. Indeed, some philosophers have entered into critical reflection and dialogue on the nature or essence of religion itself. This text will approach religion in both the traditional manner and in the more contemporary fashion as well. It will examine the issues related to the existence and nature of the deity and it will consider the nature of religious belief. This study will also take note of the findings of modern and contemporary science in its examination into religious phenomena. Philosophy is about thinking critically about religion in all of its aspects. Thinking critically about religious beliefs might indicate that they are flawed in a number of ways: These are class notes, intended to comment on readings and amplify class discussion. They should be read as such. They are not intended for publication or general distribution.

Chapter 5 : Religious views of George Washington - Wikipedia

A key difference between philosophy and religion is only religion can address "before birth" and "after death" questions. Philosophy and religion can both address the middle part. You might hear a philosopher express an opinion but since you cannot prove the argument, it is a "belief".

Chapter 6 : Religion Timeline. : atheism

Philosophy of religion is the philosophical examination of the central themes and concepts involved in religious traditions. It involves all the main areas of philosophy: metaphysics, epistemology, logic, ethics and value theory, the philosophy of language, philosophy of science, law, sociology, politics, history, and so on.

Chapter 7 : Why in christian logic Christianity is NOT a religion but Atheism is? | Yahoo Answers

This course, entitled 'Philosophy and Religion', is the second of three related courses in our Philosophy, Science and Religion Online series, and in this course we will ask important questions about the age-old debate between science and religion, such as: "What kind of conflicts are there between religion and science?"

Chapter 8 : Difference Between Philosophy and Religion | Difference Between

The philosophy of religion uses philosophical methodologies to examine religion, from the existence and attributes of God to the problems of evil, diverse religions, and conflicting belief systems. Philosophy is a systematic way of thinking about ideas and concepts, often fundamental features of the world.

Chapter 9 : Philosophy of Religion (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)

1 Ancient Myth, Religion, and Philosophy "Progress, far from consisting in change, depends on retentiveness when experience is not retained, as among savages, infancy is perpetual.