

Chapter 1 : Vatican Council and Papal Statements on Islam

Asking a difficult question can achieve better results because it taps into the Christian's desire to share the wisdom they perceive themselves to have. Any reflex for angry disagreement is quashed and replaced by an obligation to think their answer through.

Mar 18th, By Guest Author Category: We hope this dialogue between John and Devin will help us all think more deeply about what still divides us, and help us understand better how we can help effect Protestant-Catholic reunion. John Armstrong recently responded to my review of his book. In his reply, he did not address this argument, or show how his position avoids the problem I raised. He explains that he wants to avoid that realm, and thus avoid that discussion. In his book Armstrong presented various criticisms of the Catholic position. And I welcome criticisms of my position. I see that as a healthy part of robust, authentic truth-seeking ecumenical dialogue. I think that the conditions for genuine ecumenical dialogue require us to try to avoid that technique. The fact is that we must employ reason and arguments, and be open to receiving and engaging objections against our own position, for ecumenical dialogue to advance. Focusing on what we have in common is a good place to start ecumenical dialogue, but if we stayed at that level, our ecumenical engagement would remain only superficial. While building friendships with other Christians by working together to serve others in the corporal works of mercy is helpful, this by itself cannot overcome our divisions or lead to the perfect unity for which Christ prayed. It is possible to raise objections and point out problems, while ensuring an irenic tone in sincere charity. Arguments in their true sense do not have to devolve into polemics, insults, or mud-slinging. The point of disagreement is rather the objective difference between what the Catholic Church teaches and practices regarding apostolic succession, and what Protestants believe about apostolic succession. The Catholic Church teaches that Protestant ecclesial communities are not Churches, precisely because these communities do not have apostolic succession. See *Responsa ad quaestiones*, ratified and confirmed by Pope Benedict in June, So there is a real, objective, and important disagreement between Catholics and Protestants regarding apostolic succession. We cannot resolve this objective separation by refusing to talk about it, or by claiming that those who point out this disagreement are using it as a wedge. A blame-the-messenger approach would never allow us to engage the issues that presently separate us. Yes, the Catholic Church believes that catholicity as a mark of the Church is present only where apostolic succession is present. From a Catholic perspective, to reject apostolic succession is to reject something that has been believed always, everywhere, and by all the faithful. The bishops who met at Nicea in AD clearly believed and practiced apostolic succession. The practice of apostolic succession was not a novelty invented after the fourth century. This is especially applicable since Armstrong claims that we should base our faith on the common doctrines and tradition believed and practiced by both East and West in the first millennium of the Church. Apostolic succession is indisputably one of these doctrines and practices, as evidenced by the fact that the Eastern Orthodox Churches and the Oriental Orthodox Churches also believe in it and practice it. Even if Protestants agree with Catholics, they are still wrong! My point was that even if Protestants came to accept the Catholic doctrine of apostolic succession, that in itself would not be sufficient for healing the way in which Protestants and Catholics are divided over apostolic succession. And because of the organic ontological nature of apostolic authority transmitted through apostolic succession, that apostolic authority cannot be acquired or recovered merely by assenting to the doctrine of apostolic succession; it can be recovered only by reunion with those already having it. But that is not accurate. Of course Catholic ecumenical engagement with Protestants does not begin with a call to come back to the Catholic Church. But that does not mean that the return of Protestants to full communion with the Catholic Church is not the hope, prayer, and vision of the Catholic Church. We are praying rather for the return by Protestants into full communion with the presently existing Catholic Church from which sadly the first Protestants went out in the sixteenth century. Hence they could not be saved who, knowing that the Catholic Church was founded as necessary by God through Christ, would

refuse either to enter it or to remain in it. From a Catholic point of view, because Protestants do not have apostolic succession, they do not have the Eucharist. And that places Protestants in a gravely deficient position with respect to salvation: Is Return to the Catholic Church the way to Unity? I should come home to Rome! Yet in the practice of post-Vatican II ecumenism, and the teaching and practice of the last five popes, this is not what I see nor is it what I have experienced in my thousands of hours of conversation with Catholics. If neither are what they claim to be, then these Churches are making false claims about themselves, and Protestants are right to remain Protestant. How can we know? By studying history, examining evidence, laying out the arguments, and together comparing and evaluating our respective positions, all done prayerfully and charitably. I have come to believe that the Catholic Church is what she claims, and so, like someone who has discovered Christ, I seek to share it with others, the pearl of great price, so that they too may have it. I remain open to considering evidence that the Catholic Church is not the true Church, but Armstrong has not presented any in his response. The ecumenical task requires that we address both the question of criteria by which each side defines itself, and what charity requires with respect to defining respective positions. I think charity requires that in ecumenical dialogue we allow each participating party to define its own position, rather than impose on that party our own understanding or interpretation or construal of its position. So this requires that I allow Armstrong to define and determine what his position is with respect to ecclesiology, soteriology, etc. Experiences or Church Documents Armstrong wrote: It is the magisterial teaching of the Church inscribed in her authoritative documents and taught by the pope and the bishops in communion with him. Sadly, sometimes even clergy can misrepresent Catholic teaching, and it is possible that this has happened with some of those who have interacted with Armstrong. I would invite and challenge him to present these questions to Cardinal George in his upcoming dialogue. Armstrong continued by saying: Conservative Catholic apologists take the supposed high ground by using the official teaching of the church on most matters but they seem to miss that there is a continued unfolding of what their church is also saying about unity with non-Catholics, especially since Vatican II. Having spent time inside the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity I speak from firsthand experience, not simply from books and documents. I have read scores of these books and documents as well and find in these a rich treasury that calls us to new ecumenism! While I acknowledge a continued unfolding “the legitimate development of doctrine” of the inexhaustible treasure that is the deposit of faith, what Armstrong must realize regarding the Catholic Church is that the Church cannot reverse her dogmas. Genuine ecumenical dialogue, in which we allow each participating party to define its own position requires of participating Protestants that they acknowledge that according to the Catholic Church, no Catholic dogma can be reversed or negated, not even by the Catholic Church. Armstrong does not quote anything from the Catholic Church supporting his position regarding what he thinks Catholic teaching is; he only appeals to his experience. Charity calls Protestants to acknowledge that according to the Catholic Church, Catholic dogmas are irreversible, and therefore that from an authentic Catholic self-understanding, these ecclesiological dogmas cannot be overturned. But I think charity requires allowing the Catholic party in ecumenical dialogue to define its own position, and thus acknowledging that from the Catholic perspective, the Catholic Church can never deny that she is the Church Christ founded, and that true unity requires a return to full communion with her. Baptism and Eucharist Armstrong and his friend write: Am I the only person who finds this stance in-congruent? The Catholic Church is a visible body, and persons who have not even requested to be admitted to full communion with that body, and do not affirm the faith of that body, would be denying the communal meaning of the Eucharist if they were to receive the Eucharist. The celebration of the Eucharist, however, cannot be the starting-point for communion; it presupposes that communion already exists, a communion which it seeks to consolidate and bring to perfection. The profound relationship between the invisible and the visible elements of ecclesial communion is constitutive of the Church as the sacrament of salvation. Only in this context can there be a legitimate celebration of the Eucharist and true participation in it. Consequently it is an intrinsic requirement of the Eucharist that it should be celebrated in communion, and specifically maintaining the various bonds of that communion intact. Any such concelebration would not be a

valid means, and might well prove instead to be an obstacle, to the attainment of full communion, by weakening the sense of how far we remain from this goal and by introducing or exacerbating ambiguities with regard to one or another truth of the faith. The path towards full unity can only be undertaken in truth. In this area, the prohibitions of Church law leave no room for uncertainty, in fidelity to the moral norm laid down by the Second Vatican Council. Who has the authority to decide for the Catholic Church which persons are permitted to receive the Eucharist? Surely the answer to that question cannot be non-Catholics. And in the Catholic paradigm it makes perfect sense, according to the meaning of the Eucharist, why only those persons holding the Catholic faith may receive the Eucharist. This sacrament would have no such communal significance if it were given indiscriminately, even to those who knowingly deny Catholic dogmas. As a Baptist, I would not have dreamed of receiving communion in the Catholic Church. I intuitively understood that Catholics believed something about the Eucharist that was quite different from what I believed. And in any case, who was I as a Baptist to argue that the Catholic Church should give me communion? The doctrines surrounding the sacraments developed over centuries. Who are valid ministers and recipients of a particular sacrament? What is the form, and what is the matter for each one? What renders a sacrament invalid? As noted in my article, Armstrong mentioned somewhere that he believes that there are more than seven sacraments. Who gets to decide these questions? This is the question of authority, always lurking just behind such dialogues. We cannot ignore it, but must face it head-on by employing arguments and providing principled reasons for our beliefs, to determine who has the authority to give a normative answer to such questions for the Church. The Catholic Church, guided by the Holy Spirit, discerned that baptism, as the sacrament whereby one is regenerated and united to Christ and His Church, could in necessity be administered validly by anyone who used water and the proper Trinitarian formula with the intention of doing what the Church does. We rejoice in this. But she also discerned that the Eucharist should be received only by those who affirm the Catholic faith. This is not incongruent. We need not presuppose that all the sacraments must have the same kinds of possible ministers and recipients. Such a presupposition almost undermines the very plurality of the sacraments, since if the sacraments all did the very same thing, there would be no need for more than one. Does Silence Equal Ignorance? None of my arguments depends on the Joint Declaration. The fact that I did not mention the Joint Declaration does not falsify anything I said. In fact I have read the Joint Declaration, as well as the writings of various theologians and popes on the weight and authority that it has. I do think that Catholics and Protestants have made progress in our mutual understanding of each other on scores of doctrines, including justification. Called to Communion has published many blog posts and articles that have focused on this important doctrine. But though we have made progress in some ways, we still remain divided. The Joint Declaration is a sign of a greater warmth and openness in dialogue between Catholics and Lutherans.

Chapter 2 : Witnessing for Christ: Spiritual conversation starters

The methods themselves are a departure from traditional Christian practices and instead incorporate a type of mysticism common to the East (not of course derived our Eastern Christian brethren, but from the various pagan/cultist practices found in parts of Asia), entering into some type of psychological and spiritual void (for lack of a better.

Burst their bubble by asking a difficult question. Source Asking Difficult Questions When atheists engage in debates with Christians, the two sides invariably exchange insults before becoming even more militant than they previously were. Neither party intends to strengthen the resolve of the other, although both sides usually manage to sooth their egos as part of the process. Any reflex for angry disagreement is quashed and replaced by an obligation to think their answer through. Ultimately, thought is what an atheist should be trying to elicit. By asking the right questions, one can determine the direction that such thought takes. If your parents had belonged to a different religion, do you think you would belong to that religion too? If people from the five major religions are told conflicting information by their respective gods, should any of them be believed? Regarding Communication with God: How can you tell the voice of God from a voice in your head? How can you tell the voice of God from the voice of the Devil? Would you find it easier to kill someone if you believed God supported you in the act? If God told you to kill an atheist, would you? Does God really speak to you? When an atheist is kind and charitable out of the kindness of his heart, is his behavior more or less commendable than a religious man who does it because God instructed him to? If you are against the Crusades and the Inquisition, would you have been burned alive as a heretic during those events? If your interpretation of a holy book causes you to condemn your ancestors for having a different interpretation, will your descendants condemn you in the same way? If an organized religion requires a civilization in which to spread, how could this civilization exist without first having a moral code to make it civil? Regarding the Characteristics of God: An all-knowing God can read your mind, so why does he require you to demonstrate your faith by worshiping him? If God is all-knowing, why do holy books describe him as surprised or angered by the actions of humans? He should have known what was going to happen, right? An all-knowing God knows who will ultimately reject him. Why does God create people who he knows will end up in hell? Why did a supposedly omnipotent God take six days to create the universe, and why did he require rest on the seventh day? Is omnipotence necessary to create our universe when a larger, denser universe would have required more power? The Bible is a source of many questions. Source Regarding the Bible: Why are Churches filled with riches when Jesus asked his followers to give their wealth away? While in the desert, Jesus rejected the temptations of the Devil. If missionaries from your religion should be sent to convert people in other countries, should missionaries from other religions be sent to your country for the same reason? If children are likely to believe in Santa Claus and fairies, does this explain why religion has been taught to children for thousands of years? When preachers and prophets claim to be special messengers of God, they often receive special benefits from their followers. Does this ever cause you to doubt their intentions? When you declare a miracle, does this mean you understand everything that is possible in nature? If a woman was cured of cancer by means unknown to us, and everyone declared it a miracle, would the chance of scientifically replicating this cure be more or less likely? If humans declared fire to be a miracle thousands of years ago, would we still be huddling together in caves while we wait for God to throw another lightning bolt into the forest? What if he was an unkind, atheist, homosexual? Should an instruction to convert to your religion upon the threat of eternal torture in hell be met with anything other than hostility? Can a mass murderer go to heaven for accepting your religion, while a kind doctor goes to hell for not? Did the mass murdering Crusaders and Inquisitors make it into the Christian heaven? If aliens exist on several worlds that have never heard of your god, will they all be going to hell when they die? The Promises of Religion: If someone promised to give you a billion dollars after ten years but only if you worshiped them until that time, would you believe them? If someone promised you eternal life upon death, but only if you spent your life

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worshiping a god, would you believe them? Why does religion appeal more to poor, weak, vulnerable, young, ill, depressed, and ostracized people? Could religious promises be more of a temptation to these people?

Chapter 3 : Project MUSE - The Meeting of the Society for Buddhist-Christian Studies

Meeting with JCM students for informal discussion sessions have been a common practice each Quarter during Smoak's nine years of teaching at the Jubilee College of Music. Students are encouraged to ask any questions concerning music, worship, or the Christian life during these sessions.

Within the middle dialogues, it is uncontroversial that the *Phaedo* was written before the *Republic*, and most scholars think it belongs before the *Symposium* as well. His most famous theory, the theory of Forms, is presented in four different places in the dialogue. Plato draws attention at 59b to the fact that he himself was not present during the events retold, suggesting that he wants the dialogue to be seen as work of fiction. Socrates himself challenges his listeners to provide such defense at 84c-d. How seriously does Plato take these arguments, and what does the surrounding context contribute to our understanding of them? While this article will concentrate on the philosophical aspects of the *Phaedo*, readers are advised to pay close attention to the interwoven dramatic features as well.

Outline of the Dialogue The dialogue revolves around the topic of death and immortality: The text can be divided, rather unevenly, into five sections: The former asks the latter, who was present on that day, to recount what took place. He agrees to tell the whole story from the beginning; within this story the main interlocutors are Socrates, Simmias, and Cebes. Some commentators on the dialogue have taken the latter two characters to be followers of the philosopher Pythagoras B. They go in to the prison to find Socrates with his wife Xanthippe and their baby, who are then sent away. Socrates, rubbing the place on his leg where his just removed bonds had been, remarks on how strange it is that a man cannot have both pleasure and pain at the same time, yet when he pursues and catches one, he is sure to meet with the other as well. Cebes asks Socrates about the poetry he is said to have begun writing, since Evenus a Sophist teacher, not present was wondering about this. He then asks Cebes to convey to Evenus his farewell, and to tell him that "even though it would be wrong to take his own life" he, like any philosopher, should be prepared to follow Socrates to his death. The discussion starts with the question of suicide. If philosophers are so willing to die, asks Cebes, why is it wrong for them to kill themselves? As Cebes and Simmias immediately point out, however, this appears to contradict his earlier claim that the philosopher should be willing to die: The thesis to be supported is a generalized version of his earlier advice to Evenus: Socrates begins his defense of this thesis, which takes up the remainder of the present section, by defining death as the separation of body and soul. This definition goes unchallenged by his interlocutors, as does its dualistic assumption that body and soul are two distinct entities. First, the true philosopher despises bodily pleasures such as food, drink, and sex, so he more than anyone else wants to free himself from his body 64da. They are best approached not by sense perception but by pure thought alone. These entities are granted again without argument by Simmias and Cebes, and are discussed in more detail later. All told, then, the body is a constant impediment to philosophers in their search for truth: To have pure knowledge, therefore, philosophers must escape from the influence of the body as much as is possible in this life. Thus, Socrates concludes, it would be unreasonable for a philosopher to fear death, since upon dying he is most likely to obtain the wisdom which he has been seeking his whole life. Ordinary people are only brave in regard to some things because they fear even worse things happening, and only moderate in relation to some pleasures because they want to be immoderate with respect to others. Thus ends his defense. To persuade them that it continues to exist on its own will require some compelling argument. Secondly, he identifies two things which need to be demonstrated in order to convince those who are skeptical: The first argument that Socrates deploys appears to be intended to respond to a , and the second to b. The Cyclical Argument 70ce Socrates mentions an ancient theory holding that just as the souls of the dead in the underworld come from those living in this world, the living souls come back from those of the dead 70c-d. He uses this theory as the inspiration for his first argument, which may be reconstructed as follows: All things come to be from their opposite states: Between every pair of opposite states there are two opposite processes: If the two opposite processes did not balance each other out, everything would eventually

be in the same state: Therefore, everything that dies must come back to life again 72a. With this terminology in mind, some contemporary commentators have maintained that the argument relies on covertly shifting between these different kinds of opposites. Clever readers may notice other apparent difficulties as well. Does the principle about balance in 3 , for instance, necessarily apply to living things? Moreover, how does Plato account for adding new living souls to the human population? While these questions are perhaps not unanswerable from the point of view of the present argument, we should keep in mind that Socrates has several arguments remaining, and he later suggests that this first one should be seen as complementing the second 77c-d. This is likely a reference to the Meno 82b ff. The argument may be reconstructed as follows: Things in the world which appear to be equal in measurement are in fact deficient in the equality they possess 74b, d-e. In order to do this, we must have had some prior knowledge of the Equal itself 74d-e. Since this knowledge does not come from sense-perception, we must have acquired it before we acquired sense-perception, that is, before we were born 75b ff. Therefore, our souls must have existed before we were born. He could mean that the sticks may appear as equal or unequal to different observers, or perhaps they appear as equal when measured against one thing but not another. The process of recollection is initiated not just when we see imperfectly equal things, then, but when we see things that appear to be beautiful or good as well; experience of all such things inspires us to recollect the relevant Forms. Moreover, if these Forms are never available to us in our sensory experience, we must have learned them even before we were capable of having such experience. Simmias agrees with the argument so far, but says that this still does not prove that our souls exist after death, but only before birth. This difficulty, Socrates suggests, can be resolved by combining the present argument with the one from opposites: He does not elaborate on this suggestion, however, and instead proceeds to offer a third argument. There are two kinds of existences: The soul is more like world b , whereas the body is more like world a 79b-e. Therefore, supposing it has been freed of bodily influence through philosophical training, the soul is most likely to make its way to world b when the body dies 80da. If, however, the soul is polluted by bodily influence, it likely will stay bound to world a upon death 81bb. Of the impure souls, those who have been immoderate will later become donkeys or similar animals, the unjust will become wolves or hawks, those with only ordinary non-philosophical virtue will become social creatures such as bees or ants. The philosopher, on the other hand, will join the company of the gods. Hence, after death, his soul will join with that to which it is akin, namely, the divine. For he, like the swan that sings beautifully before it dies, is dedicated to the service of Apollo, and thus filled with a gift of prophecy that makes him hopeful for what death will bring. The Objections 85cc Simmias prefaces his objection by making a remark about methodology. If at the end of this investigation one fails to find the truth, one should adopt the best theory and cling to it like a raft, either until one dies or comes upon something sturdier. For one might put forth a similar argument which claims that the soul is like a harmony and the body is like a lyre and its strings. But even though a musical harmony is invisible and akin to the divine, it will cease to exist when the lyre is destroyed. Following the soul-as-harmony thesis, the same would be true of the soul when the body dies. Next Socrates asks if Cebes has any objections. In support of his doubt, he invokes a metaphor of his own. Suppose someone were to say that since a man lasts longer than his cloak, it follows that if the cloak is still there the man must be there too. We would certainly think this statement was nonsense. Just as a man might wear out many cloaks before he dies, the soul might use up many bodies before it dies. In light of this uncertainty, one should always face death with fear. Misology, he says, arises in much the same way that misanthropy does: If he had more knowledge and experience, however, he would not be so quick to make this leap, for he would realize that most people fall somewhere in between the extremes of good and bad, and he merely happened to encounter someone at one end of the spectrum. A similar caution applies to arguments. If someone thinks a particular argument is sound, but later finds out that it is not, his first inclination will be to think that all arguments are unsound; yet instead of blaming arguments in general and coming to hate reasonable discussion, we should blame our own lack of skill and experience. To begin, he gets both Simmias and Cebes to agree that the theory of recollection is true. Simmias admits this inconsistency, and says that he in fact

prefers the theory of recollection to the other view. Nonetheless, Socrates proceeds to make two additional points. First, if the soul is a harmony, he contends, it can have no share in the disharmony of wickedness. But this implies that all souls are equally good. Second, if the soul is never out of tune with its component parts as shown at 93a , then it seems like it could never oppose these parts. A passage in Homer, wherein Odysseus beats his breast and orders his heart to endure, strengthens this picture of the opposition between soul and bodily emotions. Given these counter-arguments, Simmias agrees that the soul-as-harmony thesis cannot be correct. Response to Cebes 95ab 1. He now proceeds to relate his own examinations into this subject, recalling in turn his youthful puzzlement about the topic, his initial attraction to a solution given by the philosopher Anaxagoras B. When Socrates was young, he says, he was excited by natural science, and wanted to know the explanation of everything from how living things are nourished to how things occur in the heavens and on earth. But then he realized that he had no ability for such investigations, since they caused him to unlearn many of the things he thought he had previously known. He used to think, for instance, that people grew larger by various kinds of external nourishment combining with the appropriate parts of our bodies, for example, by food adding flesh to flesh. But what is it which makes one person larger than another? Or for that matter, which makes one and one add up to two? Because of puzzles like these, Socrates is now forced to admit his ignorance: This method came about as follows. He took this to mean that everything was arranged for the best. Therefore, if one wanted to know the explanation of something, one only had to know what was best for that thing. Suppose, for instance, that Socrates wanted to know why the heavenly bodies move the way they do. Anaxagoras would show him how this was the best possible way for each of them to be.

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They were translated into Syriac, and Arabic, and eventually (in Muslim Spain) into Latin, and re-entered Christian Europe in the twelfth century accompanied by translations of the great Arabic commentaries.

Synopsis of the Republic a. Socrates speaks to Cephalus about old age, the benefits of being wealthy, and justice ed. One would not claim that it is just to return weapons one owes to a mad friend c , thus justice is not being truthful and returning what one owes as Cephalus claims. The discussion between Socrates and Polemarchus follows db. So in what context is this the case? Thus, we may treat those whom we only think are our friends or enemies well or badly. Would this be justice? Discussion between Socrates and Thrasymachus follows bc. Thrasymachus defines justice as the advantage or what is beneficial to the stronger c. Justice is different under different political regimes according to the laws, which are made to serve the interests of the strong the ruling class in each regime, ea. Socrates requires clarification of the definition: Thrasymachus points out that the stronger are really only those who do not make mistakes as to what is to their advantage d. Socrates responds with a discussion of art or craft and points out that its aim is to do what is good for its subjects, not what is good for the practitioner c. Thrasymachus suggests that some arts, such as that of shepherds, do not do this but rather aim at the advantage of the practitioner c. He also adds the claim that injustice is in every way better than justice and that the unjust person who commits injustice undetected is always happier than the just person ec. The paradigm of the happy unjust person is the tyrant who is able to satisfy all his desires a-b. Socrates claims that the best rulers are reluctant to rule but do so out of necessity: Socrates offers three argument in favor of the just life over the unjust life: Socrates is dissatisfied with the discussion since an adequate account of justice is necessary before they can address whether the just life is better than the unjust life b. Book II Glaucon is not persuaded by the arguments in the previous discussion a. He divides good things into three classes: Socrates places justice in the class of things good in themselves and for their consequences. Glaucon gives a speech defending injustice: Socrates is asked to defend justice for itself, not for the reputation it allows for b. He proposes to look for justice in the city first and then to proceed by analogy to find justice in the individual ca. This approach will allow for a clearer judgment on the question of whether the just person is happier than the unjust person. Socrates begins by discussing the origins of political life and constructs a just city in speech that satisfies only basic human necessities bc. Socrates argues that humans enter political life since each is not self-sufficient by nature. Each human has certain natural abilities a and doing only the single job one is naturally suited for, is the most efficient way to satisfy the needs of all the citizens c. Socrates points out that the luxurious city will require an army to guard the city e. The army will be composed of professional soldiers, the guardians, who, like dogs, must be gentle to fellow citizens and harsh to enemies c. Poetry and stories need to be censored to guarantee such an education b. Book III Socrates continues the political measures of the censorship of poetry: Socrates moves on to discuss the manner in which stories should be told d. He divides such manners into simple narration in third person and imitative narration in first person, d. To keep the guardians doing only their job, Socrates argues that the guardians may imitate only what is appropriate for this ed. The just city should allow only modes and rhythms that fit the content of poetry allowed in the just city bc. Socrates explains how good art can lead to the formation of good character and make people more likely to follow their reason ec. Socrates turns to the physical education of the guardians and says that it should include physical training that prepares them for war, a careful diet, and habits that contribute to the avoidance of doctors cb. Physical education should be geared to benefit the soul rather than the body, since the body necessarily benefits when the soul is in a good condition, whereas the soul does not necessarily benefit when the body is in a good condition b-c. Socrates begins to describe how the rulers of the just city are to be selected from the class of the guardians: Socrates suggests that they need to tell the citizens a myth that should be believed by subsequent generations in order for everyone to accept his position in the city bd. The myth of metals portrays each human as having a

precious metal in them: Socrates proceeds to discuss the living and housing conditions of the guardians: Book IV Adeimantus complains that the guardians in the just city will not be very happy a. Socrates points out that the aim is to make the whole city, and not any particular class, as happy as possible b. Socrates discusses several other measures for the city as a whole in order to accomplish this. There should be neither too much wealth nor too much poverty in the city since these cause social strife da. The just city should be only as large in size as would permit it to be unified and stable b. He suggests that they should only allow very limited ways by which innovations may be introduced to education or change in the laws be. The just city will follow traditional Greek religious customs b. With the founding of the just city completed, Socrates proceeds to discuss justice d. He claims that the city they have founded is completely good and virtuous and thus it is wise, courageous, moderate, and just e. Justice will be what remains once they find the other three virtues in it, namely wisdom, courage, and moderation a. The wisdom of the just city is found in its rulers and it is the type of knowledge that allows them to rule the city well b-d. The courage of the just city is found in its military and it is correct and lawful belief about what to fear and what not to fear ab. Socrates then proceeds to find the corresponding four virtues in the individual d. Socrates defends the analogy of the city and the individual a-b and proceeds to distinguish three analogous parts in the soul with their natural functions b. By using instances of psychological conflict, he distinguishes the function of the rational part from that of the appetitive part of the soul a. Then he distinguishes the function of the spirited part from the functions of the two other parts ee. The function of the rational part is thinking, that of the spirited part the experience of emotions, and that of the appetitive part the pursuit of bodily desires. Socrates points out that one is just when each of the three parts of the soul performs its function d. Socrates is now ready to answer the question of whether justice is more profitable than injustice that goes unpunished ea. To do so he will need to examine the various unjust political regimes and the corresponding unjust individuals in each c-e. Book V Socrates is about to embark on a discussion of the unjust political regimes and the corresponding unjust individuals when he is interrupted by Adeimantus and Polemarchus a-b. They insist that he needs to address the comment he made earlier that the guardians will possess the women and the children of the city in common b-d. Socrates reluctantly agrees ab and begins with the suggestion that the guardian women should perform the same job as the male guardians c-d. Some may follow convention and object that women should be given different jobs because they differ from men by nature a-c. Socrates responds by indicating that the natural differences between men and women are not relevant when it comes to the jobs of protecting and ruling the city. Both sexes are naturally suited for these tasks d-e. Socrates goes on to argue that the measure of allowing the women to perform the same tasks as the men in this way is not only feasible but also best. This is the case since the most suited people for the job will be performing it c. Socrates also proposes that there should be no separate families among the members of the guardian class: Socrates proceeds to discuss how this measure is for the best and Glaucon allows him to skip discussing its feasibility a-c. The best guardian men are to have sex with the best guardian women to produce offspring of a similar nature dd. Socrates describes the system of eugenics in more detail. In order to guarantee that the best guardian men have sex with the best guardian women, the city will have marriage festivals supported by a rigged lottery system ea. The best guardian men will also be allowed to have sex with as many women as they desire in order to increase the likelihood of giving birth to children with similar natures a-b. Once born, the children will be taken away to a rearing pen to be taken care of by nurses and the parents will not be allowed to know who their own children are c-d. This is so that the parents think of all the children as their own. Socrates recognizes that this system will result in members of the same family having intercourse with each other c-e. Socrates proceeds to argue that these arrangements will ensure that unity spreads throughout the city ad. Thereafter, Socrates discusses how the guardians will conduct war e. Glaucon interrupts him and demands an account explaining how such a just city can come into being c-e. Socrates admits that this is the most difficult criticism to address a. Then he explains that the theoretical model of the just city they constructed remains valid for discussing justice and injustice even if they cannot prove that such a city can come to exist bb. Socrates claims that the model of the just city cannot come into being

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until philosophers rule as kings or kings become philosophers c-d. He also points out that this is the only possible route by which to reach complete happiness in both public and private life e. Socrates indicates that they to, discuss philosophy and philosophers to justify these claims b-c. Philosophers love and pursue all of wisdom b-c and they especially love the sight of truth e. Philosophers are the only ones who recognize and find pleasure in what is behind the multiplicity of appearances, namely the single Form a-b. Socrates distinguishes between those who know the single Forms that are and those who have opinions d. Those who have opinions do not know, since opinions have becoming and changing appearances as their object, whereas knowledge implies that the objects thereof are stable ee. Book VI Socrates goes on to explain why philosophers should rule the city. They should do so since they are better able to know the truth and since they have the relevant practical knowledge by which to rule. Adeimantus objects that actual philosophers are either useless or bad people a-d. Socrates responds with the analogy of the ship of state to show that philosophers are falsely blamed for their uselessness ea. Like a doctor who does not beg patients to heal them, the philosopher should not plead with people to rule them b-c. Thus, someone can only be a philosopher in the true sense if he receives the proper kind of education.

Chapter 5 : Bible Questions for the Church of Christ - Faith Facts

As humans, and even as Christian humans, we enter effectively into a discussion attempting to resolve what divides us only after first establishing trust through discerning mutual good will, and mutually agreeing on common ground.

She has a high regard for the manner of life and conduct, the precepts and doctrines which, although differing in many ways from her own teaching, nevertheless often reflect a ray of that truth which enlightens all men. In him, in whom God reconciled all things to himself cf. Let Christians, while witnessing to their own faith and way of life, acknowledge, preserve and encourage the spiritual and moral truths found among non-Christians, also their social life and culture. They worship God, who is one, living and subsistent, merciful and almighty, the Creator of heaven and earth Cf. Although not acknowledging him as God, they venerate Jesus as a prophet, his Virgin Mother they also honor, and even at times devoutly invoke. Further, they await the day of judgment and the reward of God following the resurrection of the dead. For this reason they highly esteem an upright life and worship God, especially by way of prayer, alms-deeds and fasting. The sacred Council now pleads with all to forget the past, and urges that a sincere effort be made to achieve mutual understanding; for the benefit of all men, let them together preserve and promote peace, liberty, social justice and moral values. May these peoples, worshipers of the one God, also welcome our best wishes for peace in justice. The common belief in the Almighty professed by millions calls down upon this continent the graces of his Providence and love, most of all, peace and unity among all its sons. It is a humble and ardent prayer for peace, through the intercession of the glorious protectors of Africa, who gave up their lives for love and for their belief. In recall the Catholic and Anglican Martyrs, We gladly recall also those confessors of the Muslim faith who were the first to suffer death, in the year , for refusing to transgress the precepts of their religion. And there is more: Thanks to this law, man will never submit to any idol. The Christian keeps to the solemn commandment: On his side, the Muslim will always say: Peter wrote to your predecessors to invite you to consider every day the deep roots of faith in God in whom also your Muslim fellow citizens believe, in order to draw from this the principle of a collaboration with a view to the progress of man, emulation in good, and the extension of peace and brotherhood in free profession of the faith peculiar to each one. But we are especially brothers in God, who created us and whom we are trying to reach, in our own ways, through faith, prayer and worship, through the keeping of his law and through submission to his designs. Is it not right to think that in the Philippines, the Muslims and the Christians are really traveling on the same ship, for better or for worse, and that in the storms that sweep across the world the safety of each individual depends upon the efforts and cooperation of all? Society cannot bring citizens the happiness that they expect from it unless society itself is built upon dialogue. Dialogue in turn is built upon trust, and trust presupposes not only justice but mercy. Without any doubt, equality and freedom, which are at the foundation of every society, require law and justice. But as I said in a recent letter addressed to the whole Catholic Church, justice by itself is not enough: I would like to add that we Christians, just like you, seek the basis and model of mercy in God himself, the God to whom your Book gives the very beautiful name of al-Rahman, while the Bible calls him al-Rahum, the Merciful One. I am anxious to encourage you along this difficult way, where failure may occur, but where hope is even stronger. To maintain it, strong Christian convictions are necessary. More than elsewhere, it is highly desirable that Christians should take part, as you encourage them to do, in a permanent catechesis which completes a biblical renewal course, or more exactly a reading of the Word of God in the Church, with the help of theologians and truly competent spiritual teachers. That is why it is surrounded by discretion out of a concern to be considerate with regard to the slowness of the evolution of mentalities. The seriousness of commitment in this dialogue is measured by that of the witness lived and borne to the values in which one believes, and, for the Christian, to him who is their foundation, Jesus Christ. This sincere dialogue and this demanding witness involve a part of spiritual abnegation: Such a spirit is embodied in the first place in disinterested service with a view to fraternity participating in the development of these countries and to sharing the aspirations of their people. I

am anxious to stress here the quality of the work carried out by so many of those cooperators in the discretion and dedication, and by those who supported them. I do not want to dwell here on this important question of the dialogue between Christians and Muslims, with which I quite recently dealt in my conversations with your confreres in North Africa. But I am anxious to point out the importance of the initiative you have taken in common in this field, in the framework of the Regional Episcopal Conference of West Africa, by creating a special commission to promote such a dialogue. Paul stresses the love we must show toward all, and the duty to lead a blameless life in the sight of God: As the spiritual head of the Catholic Church, I have had many other opportunities both to welcome Muslims in Rome and to visit them in various countries in the course of my travels. We believe that God transcends our thoughts and our universe and that his loving presence accompanies us throughout each day. In prayer, we place ourselves in the presence of God to offer him our worship and thanksgiving, to ask forgiveness for our faults, and to seek his help and blessing. We know that this does not resolve all the problems which are common to the plight of immigrants. Nevertheless, these very difficulties ought to be an incentive to all believers, Christian and Muslim, to come to know one another better, to engage in dialogue in order to find peaceful ways of living together and mutually enriching one another. This is a fundamental dialogue which must be practiced in neighborhoods, in places of work, in schools. This is the dialogue which is proper to believers who live together in a modern and pluralistic society. In confronting this situation, allow me to repeat the advice of the Apostle Paul: This type of mutual emulation can benefit the whole society, especially those who find themselves most in need of justice, consolation, hope - in a word, those in need of reasons for living. We know that by working together fraternally, we will thus be carrying out the will of God. We live in the same world, marked by many signs of hope, but also by multiple signs of anguish. For us, Abraham is a model of faith in God, of submission to his will and of confidence in his goodness. We believe in the same God, the one God, the living God, the God who created the world and brings his creatures to their perfection. He expects from us obedience to His holy will in a free consent of mind and heart. It is of God himself that, above all, I wish to speak with you; of him, because it is in him that we believe, you Muslims and we Catholics. I wish also to speak with you about human values, which have their basis in God, these values which concern the blossoming of our person, as also that of our families and our societies, as well as that of the international community. The mystery of God - is it not the highest reality from which depends the very meaning which man gives to his life? And is it not the first problem that presents itself to a young person, when he reflects upon the mystery of his own existence and on the values which he intends to choose in order to build his growing personality? He is the origin of all life, as he is at the source of all that is good, of all that is beautiful, of all that is holy. His holy law guides our life. It is the light of God which orients our destiny and enlightens our conscience. He expects from us obedience to his holy will in a free consent of mind and of heart. It is He, God, who is our judge; He who alone is truly just. We know, however, that his mercy is inseparable from His justice. When man returns to Him, repentant and contrite, after having strayed into the disorder of sin and the works of death, God then reveals Himself as the one who pardons and shows mercy. For His blessing and His mercy, we thank Him, at all times and in all places. We believers know that we do not live in a closed world. We believe in God. We are worshipers of God. We are seekers of God. Both of us believe in one God, the only God, who is all justice and all mercy; we believe in the importance of prayer, of fasting, of almsgiving, of repentance and of pardon; we believe that God will be a merciful judge to us all at the end of time, and we hope that after the resurrection He will be satisfied with us and we know that we will be satisfied with him. Obviously the most fundamental is the view that we hold onto the person and work of Jesus of Nazareth. You know that, for Christians, Jesus causes them to enter into an intimate knowledge of the mystery of God and into the filial communion by His gifts, so that they recognize Him and proclaim Him Lord and Savior. We must respect each other, and we must stimulate each other in good works on the path of God. Ideologies and slogans cannot satisfy you nor can they solve the problems of your life. Only spiritual and moral values can do it, and they have God at their foundation. On this path, you are assured, of the esteem and the collaboration of your Catholic brothers and sisters whom I represent among

you this evening. He wants us to be merciful toward each other. Along this path there are new solutions to be found to the political, racial and confessional conflicts which have plagued the human family throughout history. Jews, Christians and Muslims. My prayers and hopes are with you as you pursue your reflection on the God of mercy and justice, the God of peace and reconciliation! It inspires you to face the challenges of the present day with love and responsibility. We have many spiritual resources in common which we must share with one another as we work for a more human world. Young people especially know how to be open with each other and they want a world in which all the basic freedoms, including the freedom of religious belief, will be respected. This is also true in Bangladesh. Since we are believers in God - who is goodness and perfection - all our activities must reflect the holy and upright nature of the one whom we worship and seek to obey. Both Christians and Muslims are called to defend the inviolable right of each individual to freedom of religious belief and practice. There have been in the past, and there continue to be in the present, unfortunate instances of misunderstanding, intolerance and conflict between Christians and Muslims, especially in circumstances where either Muslims or Christians are a minority or are guest workers in a given country. It is our challenge as religious leaders to find ways to overcome such difficulties in a spirit of justice, brotherhood and mutual respect. As believers, we do not deny or reject any of the real benefits which modern developments have brought, but we are convinced nevertheless that without reference to God modern society is unable to lead men and women to the goal for which they have been created. It is here too that Christians and Muslims can work together, bearing witness before modern civilization to the divine presence and loving Providence which guide our steps. Together we can proclaim that he who has made us has called us to live in harmony and justice. May the blessing of the Most High accompany you in your endeavors on behalf of dialogue and peace. This cooperation in solidarity towards the most afflicted can form the concrete basis for a sincere, profound and constant dialogue between believing Catholics and believing Muslims, from which there can arise a strengthened mutual knowledge and trust, and the assurance that each one everywhere will be able to profess freely and authentically his or her own faith. We must all learn to recognize these elements in our own lives and societies, and find ways to overcome them. Only when individuals and groups undertake this education for peace can we build a fraternal and united world, freed from war and violence. You and we owe this charity to ourselves especially because we believe in and confess one God, admittedly, in a different way, and daily praise and venerate him, the creator of the world and ruler of this world. May the Most High God fill us with all His merciful love and peace. He receives this title because of his flawless faith in God. I am happy to note that, since the arrival of the first Christians in this land, the people of Senegal have given the world a good example of this sharing life. They noted that the young people have worked together to build cemeteries, mosques and churches; that school children engage in healthy emulation to make their schools places of peace, forgiveness and fraternity; that adults work together to improve the life of the community spirit of the country. I would like to support and encourage all these efforts at building a harmonious society because I am convinced that this is the way of God. Our Creator and our final judge desires that we live together. Our God is a God of peace, who desires peace among those who live according to His commandments.

Chapter 6 : Plato: Phaedo | Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy

From a little known text by Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger published in Concerning some objections to the Church's teaching on the reception of Holy Communion by divorced and remarried members of the faithful.

Co-Laborers for the Healing of Brokenness, [1] each church would fully recognize the ministries and sacraments of the other in all respects. As a Christian and an Episcopalian, I hope and pray that the Episcopal Church rejects this proposal, for two reasons. First, A Gift to the World does not candidly acknowledge the significant problems with what it asks the Episcopal Church to do. Second, if the Episcopal Church does agree that A Gift to the World adequately represents its understanding of the essential principles of Christian ecumenism, the Episcopal Church will have departed dramatically from Anglican tradition and from its own past practices. If we are to enter into full communion with our United Methodist fellow Christians, I believe we should do so knowing what we are doing, and we should act as faithful stewards of our tradition. The outline of the argument The Episcopal Church, along with the rest of the Anglican Communion, has long insisted that Christian unity or full communion must involve the common acceptance of four principles, known as the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral, concerning the Scriptures as the rule of faith, the authority of the two ancient creeds, the celebration of baptism and Eucharist using the traditional sacramental elements, and the maintenance of the historic episcopate. A Gift to the World claims that its proposal for full communion between the UMC and the Episcopal Church is consistent with the Quadrilateral, but this claim is untrue. A Gift to the World does not ask the UMC to make any commitment to accept the Quadrilateral on this, and indeed simply ignores the matter. A Gift for the World makes no reference to the beliefs of the early Church and may suggest that the role of the creeds is primarily to assist individuals in coming to whatever conclusions they wish about the substance of Christian faith. These discrepancies between the principles of unity of the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral and the affirmations in A Gift to the World are neither technicalities nor trivialities. Despite the importance of these issues, A Gift to the World seems artfully written to downplay or obscure them, and it makes no attempt to explain why the Episcopal Church should weaken or reject altogether principles to which it has explicitly adhered for over a century and on which it insisted in reaching its earlier full communion agreements. The Historic Episcopate, locally adapted in the methods of its administration to the varying needs of the nations and peoples called of God into Unity. In no sense does it purport to exclude other Christians from the universal Church of Christ. The principles of unity that the bishops announced thus raise the possibility of continuing disunity because of principled disagreement between Anglicans and other Christians. And the UMC does not agree that acceptance of the historic episcopate, as that term is used in the fourth principle, is necessary to Christian unity or full communion. In reality, the dialogue committee is proposing that on these issues the Episcopal Church depart from the traditional Anglican position. The committee owed its reader a candid acknowledgment of that fact and an explanation of how such departures can be justified. This rubric remains in effect in The United Methodist Church. United Methodists are encouraged to use de-alcoholized wine rather than grape juice, and the use of real wine in addition to grape juice. What is clear, if unstated, is that the UMC has not accepted the third Chicago-Lambeth principle with respect to the Eucharist. If the Episcopal Church accepts this proposal, therefore, we will disavow our traditional insistence on the unfailing use of wine in the Eucharist. Why in end does this issue of grape juice versus wine matter? After all, there are Christians who for medical or other reasons should not receive wine in communion, and surely there must be a way to ensure their full participation in communion. More broadly, there are Old Testament and early Church antecedents for the UMC ideal of abstinence from alcoholic beverages, and even if the Episcopal Church need not accept that ideal for itself, surely we would be elevating form over substance to treat the UMC tradition as a barrier to full communion. What purpose would that serve? The Anglican answer to these objections is, or ought to be, obvious. In doing so, furthermore, we maintain the essential identity of our sacramental life with that of the

ancient and undivided Church, and with all the Christian churches of today for whom ancient and ecumenical practice is normative. And we maintain faith with our own Anglican tradition and with our fellow Anglican churches, and with the ELCA and MC with whom we are already in full communion. We can and should recognize and rejoice in those commitments. We show no lack of charity in responding to our UMC fellow Christians that we believe them to be mistaken, and that until our two churches can come to a genuine meeting of the minds on how to obey our common Lord on this matter, full communion will remain impossible. ELCA bishops were not within the historic episcopate and there were historical questions about the Moravian episcopate. The churches achieved full communion only through a candid acknowledgment by each church of the initial difficulties, and a successful search for a principled resolution of those difficulties. Not everyone will agree with the theological arguments justifying the steps that each church took, but it is clear beyond doubt that in both instances the Episcopal Church and our dialogue partners shared a common understanding of what the historic episcopate is, and acted on that understanding in moving to full communion. John Wesley was a priest of the Church of England, and he made strenuous efforts to keep the 18th century movement of Christian renewal he led within the institutional bounds of the Church. We recognize the ministries of our bishops as fully valid and authentic. Nothing in the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral requires that anyone, Anglican or otherwise, accept this theory, which rests on what is probably an oversimplification of early Christian history. However, since we know that at other points *A Gift to the World* is artfully silent, there is reason for concern that its omission of language found in the two previous EC full communion agreements is not accidental. In answering the question why Methodists recite creeds during worship, the website explains: The United Methodist Hymnal contains nine creeds or affirmations. Affirmations help us come to our own understanding of the Christian faith. Christian churches have an obligation to uphold this truth, whatever the doubts or questions of individual Christians, to insure that our faith is in continuity with that of the early and undivided Church. The Gospel is a message given to us all, not an invitation to each of us to craft a personal worldview. I do not believe it is possible, on the basis of *A Gift to the World*, to determine whether the UMC position and the traditional Anglican understanding of the creeds are in accord. But it is hard to dismiss the concern that *A Gift to the World* deals with the role of the creeds more briefly than the earlier ELCA and Moravian proposals for a substantive reason. Were the UMC members of the committee unwilling no doubt for good reasons from their perspective to agree to a more robust endorsement of the Anglican belief that the ancient creeds and ecumenical dogmas express Christian truth? Why does any of this matter? *A Gift to the World* begins by describing its purpose in beautiful words: The Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral is an attempt to outline what Anglicans have thought is essential to the catholic vision of that truth. To say this is in no way to claim that the Quadrilateral states all of Christian truth, or that Anglicans have nothing to learn from other Christian churches. I do not doubt that we Episcopalians have much to learn from our UMC brothers and sisters. But we offer them no insult when we reiterate our belief that full Christian unity and communion can exist only through common acceptance of the essential signs of catholic Christianity, as traditionally understood. The members of the UMC act rightly if they decline to accept aspects of the Anglican understanding of Christianity that they do not conscientiously believe. Episcopalians honor neither the United Methodist Church nor God if we surrender or compromise principles that we do accept and believe to be essential. The committee could have stated openly that its proposal compromises two of the four Chicago-Lambeth principles and leaves unclear the UMC position on a third. For those of us who believe that the Episcopal Church should adhere to the Chicago-Lambeth principles, *A Gift to the World* is fatally flawed in substance as well. Conclusion This essay may well contain errors of fact or judgment, and if I so I welcome correction and better information. Rejecting *A Gift to the World* will leave unchanged our welcome to our baptized UMC brothers and sisters to receive communion at any Episcopal altar rail. Rejecting *A Gift to the World* should not interfere with any common projects of Christian mission or service that our two churches are undertaking or may enter into in the future. Rejecting *A Gift to the World* ought not prevent Episcopalians from continuing to learn from the uniquely Methodist witness to Christianity. The ELCA, furthermore, was

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not prepared to surrender the traditional Lutheran position that the historic episcopate is not essential to Christian unity. Nothing in Lutheran theology, after all, rejects the value of the historic episcopate as a sign of unity in the apostolic faith. Co-Laborers for the Healing of Brokenness, <http://www.cohc.org/>: This is the later, version of the Quadrilateral. See Called to Common Mission: It should not be necessary for the reader to refer to a different, much longer document in order to discover that neither of these assertions is, in fact, completely true. I have no doubt that the Church can and should make pastoral accommodation for those who ought to abstain from wine, but A Gift to the World proposes no pastoral accommodation. But they agree with the Western tradition that consecration in the historic succession is necessary for someone to be a bishop in the historic catholic episcopate. The wording here is misleading. See also ATF But the promise to suspend the rule with respect to UMC elders and deacons makes no sense if, as A Gift to the World assures us, UMC bishops are within the historic episcopate. I do not know, of course, why A Gift to the World provides for an Episcopal Church action that its logic makes unnecessary.

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Chapter 7 : The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith Collection II (14 vols.) - Logos Bible Software

7 Questions Skeptics Ask Home > On learning I was a Christian communicator, she related that a professing Christian had signed a contract with her, attempted to lead her to Christ, then later.

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.

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Chapter 8 : Philosophy of Religion (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)

Concerning Some Objections to the Church's Teaching on the Reception of Holy Communion by Divorced and Remarried Members of the Faithful Some Considerations concerning the Response to Legislative Proposals on the Non-Discrimination of Homosexual Persons.

Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading. Want to join us? What do you mean? I go by the Bible. I just told you that I only go by the Bible, and yet you have just equated the study of this Westminster Confession with a study of the Scriptures! And as I just said, I only go by the Bible, too. How could it be biblical if it was merely what you -- an uninspired man -- told me? I only listen to the inspired words of the Bible. Are you saying the meaning of the Bible, even if explained in the uninspired words of uninspired men, is still binding -- in fact, as binding as the very words written in the Bible? The meaning of the Bible, though stated in different words, has the same authority as the exact words found there. After all, the writers of the Confession were only putting forth what they thought was the meaning of the Bible. I know of one difference: They were recognized as having these gifts by the various churches that delegated them to sit at the Westminster Assembly. Any scholar who knows anything about Protestant history knows that these men were the "cream of the crop", and that almost certainly there has never been since that time and maybe even up to that time, except for the apostles themselves one body containing so many godly and learned men. Furthermore, the Holy Spirit says in Ephesians 4 that Christ has given to the church teachers as a powerful and necessary means to building up the body of Christ into "a perfect or complete man". This is because he desires that we know the meaning of the Bible, not just the bare words. Dabney said, "He who would consistently banish creeds must silence all preaching and reduce the teaching of the church to the recital of the exact words of Holy Scripture without note or comment. The Bible everywhere speaks of the church as one body throughout all history Gal. Actually, because these men were on the crest of the waves of reformation, and not in the trough of apostasy as we are today, we ought to pay more attention to them than to contemporary teachers. What time did you say you were meeting? I believe the meaning of Scripture requires that I attend! The primary object of terms of communion in the Church is to exhibit the law and covenant of God, and then agreement of persons in their apprehension of these, together with their joint and declared resolution to walk accordingly. Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. To state these doctrines, to place them before the eye in logical connections, to apply them to saints and sinners; to defend them and their just application when denied in theory and disregarded in practice: A brief index of topics discussed, and of some objections against our terms of communion is included before the dialogue for quick reference page numbers not included in the html format. An acknowledgement of the Old and New Testament to be the word of God, and the alone infallible rule of faith and practice. That the whole doctrine of the Westminster Confession of Faith, and the Catechisms, Larger and Shorter, are agreeable unto, and founded upon, the Scriptures. That Presbyterial Church Government and manner of worship are alone of divine right and unalterable; and that the most perfect model of these as yet attained, is exhibited in the Form of Government and Directory for Worship [both of these were productions of the Westminster Assembly], adopted by the Church of Scotland in the Second Reformation []. That public, social covenanting, is an ordinance of God, obligatory on churches and nations under the New Testament; that the National Covenant and the Solemn League are an exemplification of this divine institution; and that these Deeds are of continued obligation upon the moral person [that is, the church in subsequent ages]; and in consistency with this -- that the Renovation of these Covenants at Auchensauth [Scotland], , was agreeable to the word of God. An approbation of the faithful contendings of the martyrs of Jesus, especially in Scotland, against Paganism, Popery, Prelacy, Malignancy and Sectarianism; immoral civil

governments; Erastian tolerations and persecutions which flow from them; and of the Judicial Testimony emitted by the Reformed Presbytery in North Britain, and adopted by this church, with supplements; as containing a noble example to be followed, in contending for all divine truth, and in testifying against all corruptions embodied in the constitutions of either churches or states. Practically adorning the doctrine of God our Savior by walking in all his commandments and ordinances blamelessly. Doctrine and Practice not just doctrine required as terms of communion Faith without works is dead applies to church as moral person, not simply individuals True unity found in Scriptural doctrine and practice; no unity without both of these Differing level of authority for Bible vs. I sure am glad I saw that the meaning of Scripture compelled me to study the Westminster Confession of Faith with you. These past few months have been amazingly enlightening and edifying! Your diligence and eagerness have been an encouragement and motivation to me, and to others. I got a copy of your terms of communion, and they looked really good at first. And he put some doubts in your mind? He said that the doctrines and terms of communion they -- and you -- adopted will forever perpetuate that schism. He said you were basically Papists, putting uninspired works on a par with the Bible and then abusing your church authority by requiring faith in the church, rather than in the word of God. Did he substantiate it? How much of Steele has he read? We went through the six terms and I took notes. Can you and I go through them? Maybe you can answer his objections. Let me grab some books first. Well, neither he nor I had any problems with the first term -- "an acknowledgement of the Old and New Testament to be the word of God, and the alone infallible rule of faith and practice" -- or the sixth term -- "practically adorning the doctrine of God our Savior by walking in all his commandments and ordinances blamelessly. He said they imbibed the Erastianism of their day, showing this by their giving far too much authority to the civil government in matters of religion; especially in Chapter 23, Section 3. Fact is, they except for two or three of them ardently opposed Erastianism! The wording of the very section of the Confession in question makes this clear: He quieted down and asked if he could borrow it. That speaks well of him. What else did he, or do you, have problems with? I actually read through the Form of Government and the Directory for Worship a couple of times. Yeah, I find it very telling as to how precise they were. You know George Gillespie wrote that adopting act? Not surprising; he argues for the practice in his Miscellany Questions and in English Popish Ceremonies. Anyway, how about the 4th term -- "that public, social covenanting, is an ordinance of God, obligatory on churches and nations under the New Testament; that the National Covenant and the Solemn League are an exemplification of this divine institution; and that these Deeds are of continued obligation upon the moral person; and in consistency with this-- that the Renovation of these Covenants at Auchensaugh, , was agreeable to the word of God"? He asked me how Steelites could say that the United States was still bound by the Solemn League and Covenant, since we declared independence from England in What did you say? Do you think the United States is still obligated by this covenant? Did Israel cease to be under her covenant obligations when she split from Judah? Was she no longer bound not to exterminate the Gibeonites, for example? Well, I guess she was still under her covenant obligations. Ours was lawful -- Britain had flagrantly and habitually violated her agreement with us. If the Jews would have started other nations -- national offspring -- would these new nations be bound to the national covenants of Israel their mother? Why should one nation be bound to something another nation is bound to? After all, they were separate individuals. Yes, but that was a family, not a nation. True, but God views the nations as moral persons. Thus, not only are her individual members bound to own God as their God, love righteousness and hate evil, etc. Furthermore, she can and should, as a nation, enter into covenant with God. And since she continues to exist as a nation even though the individuals comprising her populace die, and new generations spring up, her covenant bonds made by leaders in previous generations are still binding, because she -- as a nation, the party originally covenanting with God -- still lives. Is there any scriptural proof? Oh, yes -- lots. Take just a couple examples. In Genesis 50, Joseph required an oath of the children of Israel, to carry his bones up out of Egypt when God would bring them out. In fact, the Holy Spirit deemed it so important that he draws our attention to it in Exodus No other view can explain this adequately. After all, the church, as a moral person, has offspring Rev. So does the

whose church of Babylon Rev. Are my children bound by the covenant obligations I made on their behalf, as their representative head, in baptism? And I just remembered Deuteronomy 5: Also, the Solemn League and Covenant itself says "that we, and our posterity after us, may, as brethren, live in faith and love, and the Lord may delight to dwell in the midst of us. Consider also another quote from those Acts: Albeit the League and Covenant be despised by that prevailing party in England, and the Work of Uniformity, thorow [through] the retardements and obstructions that have come in the way, be almost forgotten by these Kingdoms, yet the obligation of that Covenant is perpetual, and all the duties contained therein are constantly to be minded, and prosecute by every one of us and our posterity, according to their place and stations. From the Year to the Year Inclusive, 27 July , Session 27, "A seasonable and necessary Warning and Declaration, concerning Present and Imminent dangers, and concerning duties relating thereto; from the Generall Assembly of this Kirk, unto all the Members thereof", p. It deserves emphasizing that if we reject this principle of covenantal headship, or representation, we make much of the Bible unintelligible, and we overthrow biblical presbyterianism, as I noted in the example of baptism. So, I believe that "public, social covenanting, is an ordinance of God, obligatory on churches and nations under the New Testament. There were a lot of other covenants during the reformation. Anyway, to answer your question, at least in part. Nationally, we are the offspring of England the Solemn League and Covenant was not only an ecclesiastical, but a national covenant. Ecclesiastically, we are the offspring of the Church of Scotland. All Presbyterian bodies in America and Canada -- indeed, I think most in the world -- trace their lineage back to the Revolution church of , which in turn is the heritage of the Resolutioners -- those who broke covenant in Also, some of us even trace our familial lineage to England, Scotland, and Ireland. Second, we know of no covenants that rival, let alone excel, these covenants for their faithfulness to the Scriptures. They are, in themselves, one of the attainments of the second reformation which God requires us to live up to Prov. Hence, the fourth term of communion designates them, "an exemplification" of the ordinance of covenanting. Actually, we own all scriptural covenants of which we are the obliged posterity.

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Chapter 9 : CATHOLIC ENCYCLOPEDIA: Purgatory

Abstract. Our study provides a review of argument-based scientific literature to address conscientious objections to end-of-life procedures. We also proposed a taxonomy based on this study that might facilitate clarification of this discussion at a basic level.

Does God or a Higher Power seem personal to you? Do you feel close to or far away from God? What do you imagine that God is like? Can you point to things that God has done for you? How is God working in your life right now? Do you feel there are barriers of some type separating you from God? Have you ever been mad or upset with God? Have you ever done something for which you feel God could not forgive you? Do you understand the way to forgiveness and what it means? What would it take for you to live up to what God expects of you? Devotional life and practice What kinds of religious material do you like to read? What are your favorite authors, writings? Do you like religious music? Have you read much of the Bible? Do you understand the Bible when you read it? Does Bible reading help in living? Is prayer a meaningful part of your devotional life? Do you feel there is spiritual growth going on right now in your life? The Church Are you involved in a church? What you get out of being involved in a church? Which teachings of your church resonate the most with you? Do you personally know anyone who is the pastor of a church? Are you a member of an accountability or nurturing group in your church? Religion and illness, dying and death Has being ill made any difference in your thinking or feeling about God or your religious faith? How has being ill affected your devotional life? When you are ill, do you ever feel that God may be punishing you or that it is His will for you to be sick? How do you feel about suffering? Do you trust God with your future?