

Chapter 1 : Philosophy and Christian Theology (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)

Berea Lutheran Church Audio Sermon on Luke "No servant can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other."

Philosophy and Christian Theology In the history of Christian theology, philosophy has sometimes been seen as a natural complement to theological reflection, whereas at other times practitioners of the two disciplines have regarded each other as mortal enemies. Some early Christian thinkers such as Tertullian were of the view that any intrusion of secular philosophical reason into theological reflection was out of order. Thus, even if certain theological claims seemed to fly in the face of the standards of reasoning defended by philosophers, the religious believer should not flinch. Other early Christian thinkers, such as St. Augustine of Hippo, argued that philosophical reflection complemented theology, but only when these philosophical reflections were firmly grounded in a prior intellectual commitment to the underlying truth of the Christian faith. Thus, the legitimacy of philosophy was derived from the legitimacy of the underlying faith commitments. It was during this time however that St. Thomas Aquinas offered yet another model for the relationship between philosophy and theology. According to the Thomistic model, philosophy and theology are distinct enterprises, differing primarily in their intellectual starting points. Philosophy takes as its data the deliverances of our natural mental faculties: These data can be accepted on the basis of the reliability of our natural faculties with respect to the natural world. Theology, on the other hand takes as its starting point the divine revelations contained in the Bible. These data can be accepted on the basis of divine authority, in a way analogous to the way in which we accept, for example, the claims made by a physics professor about the basic facts of physics. Since this way of thinking about philosophy and theology sharply demarcates the disciplines, it is possible in principle that the conclusions reached by one might be contradicted by the other. According to advocates of this model, however, any such conflict must be merely apparent. Since God both created the world which is accessible to philosophy and revealed the texts accessible to theologians, the claims yielded by one cannot conflict with the claims yielded by another unless the philosopher or theologian has made some prior error. Since the deliverances of the two disciplines must then coincide, philosophy can be put to the service of theology and perhaps vice-versa. How might philosophy play this complementary role? First, philosophical reasoning might persuade some who do not accept the authority of purported divine revelation of the claims contained in religious texts. Thus, an atheist who is unwilling to accept the authority of religious texts might come to believe that God exists on the basis of purely philosophical arguments. Second, distinctively philosophical techniques might be brought to bear in helping the theologian clear up imprecise or ambiguous theological claims. Thus, for example, theology might provide us with information sufficient to conclude that Jesus Christ was a single person with two natures, one human and one divine, but leave us in the dark about exactly how this relationship between divine and human natures is to be understood. The philosopher can provide some assistance here, since, among other things, he or she can help the theologian discern which models are logically inconsistent and thus not viable candidates for understanding the relationship between the divine and human natures in Christ. For most of the twentieth century, the vast majority of English language philosophy—“including philosophy of religion”—went on without much interaction with theology at all. While there are a number of complex reasons for this divorce, three are especially important. The first reason is that atheism was the predominant opinion among English language philosophers throughout much of that century. A second, quite related reason is that philosophers in the twentieth century regarded theological language as either meaningless, or, at best, subject to scrutiny only insofar as that language had a bearing on religious practice. The former belief is. Since much theological language, for example, language describing the doctrine of the Trinity, lacks empirical content, such language must be meaningless. The latter belief, inspired by Wittgenstein, holds that language itself only has meaning in specific practical contexts, and thus that religious language was not aiming to express truths about the world which could be subjected to objective philosophical scrutiny. In the last forty years, however, philosophers of religion have returned to the business of theorizing about many of the traditional doctrines of Christianity and have begun to apply the tools of

contemporary philosophy in ways that are somewhat more eclectic than what was envisioned under the Augustinian or Thomistic models. In keeping with the recent academic trend, contemporary philosophers of religion have been unwilling to maintain hard and fast distinctions between the two disciplines. As a result, it is often difficult in reading recent work to distinguish what the philosophers are doing from what the theologians and philosophers of past centuries regarded as strictly within the theological domain. In what follows, we provide a brief survey of work on the three topics in contemporary philosophical theology that "aside from general issues concerning the nature, attributes, and providence of God" have received the most attention from philosophers of religion over the past quarter century. We thus leave aside such staple topics in philosophy of religion as traditional arguments for the existence of God, the problem of evil, the epistemology of religious belief, the nature and function of religious language. We also leave aside a variety of important but less-discussed topics in philosophical theology, such as the nature of divine revelation and scripture, original sin, the authority of tradition, and the like.

Trinity From the beginning, Christians have affirmed the claim that there is one God, and three persons "Father, Son, and Holy Spirit" each of whom is God. Although we profess three persons we do not profess three substances but one substance and three persons. If we are asked about the individual Person, we must answer that he is God. No doubt this is an understatement. Indeed, it looks like we can derive a contradiction from the doctrine, as follows: Either way, however, we have a problem. If the Father is identical to God and the Son is identical to God, then by the transitivity of identity the Father is identical to the Son, contrary to the doctrine. On the other hand, if the Father is divine and the Son is divine and the Father is distinct from the Son, then there are at least two divine persons. Either way, then, the doctrine seems incoherent. At first blush, it might seem rather easy to solve. The answer, in short, is that the Christian tradition has set boundaries on how the doctrine is to be explicated, and these sorts of models fall afoul of those boundaries. Modalism confounds the persons. It is the view that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are mere manifestations, modes, or roles played by the one and only God. Ruling out modalism thus rules out analogies like the Superman analogy just given. Tritheism divides the substance. It is a bit tricky because controversial to say exactly what tritheism, or polytheism more generally, is. For discussion, see Rea. But whatever else it might be, it is certainly implied by the view that there are three distinct divine substances. Assuming the items in your shopping cart count as multiple distinct substances, then, the problem with the shopping cart analogy is that it suggests polytheism. In what follows, we will consider several more sophisticated models of the trinity: These do not exhaust the field of possible solutions, but they are the ones to which the most attention has been paid in the recent literature. For more detailed surveys, see Rea and, at book length, McCall. This suggests the analogy of a family, or, more generally, a society. Thus, the persons of the trinity might be thought of as one in just the way that the members of a family are one: Since there is no contradiction in thinking of a family as three and one in this way, this analogy appears to solve the problem. Those who attempt to understand the trinity primarily in terms of this analogy are typically called social trinitarians. This approach has been controversially associated with the Eastern Church, tracing its roots to the Cappadocian Fathers "Basil of Caesarea, his brother Gregory of Nyssa, and their friend Gregory Nazianzen. Against this practice, see especially Ayres and Barnes b. Consider, for example, the children of Chronos in Greek mythology, of whom Zeus was the liberator. These children included Zeus, Hera, Ares, and a variety of other Olympian deities "all members of a divine family. Nobody, however, thinks that the fact that Zeus and his siblings nor even, say, Zeus and his begotten daughter Athena count in any meaningful sense as one god. For this reason, social trinitarians are often quick to note that there are other relations that hold between members of the trinity that contribute, along with their being members of a single divine family, to their counting as one God. Richard Swinburne, for example, has defended a version of this view according to which the unity among the divine persons is secured by several facts in conjunction with one another. First, the divine persons share all of the essential characteristics of divinity: Second, unlike the deities of familiar polytheistic systems, their wills are necessarily harmonious, so that they can never come into conflict with one another. Third, they stand in a relationship of perfect love and necessary mutual interdependence. On this sort of view, there is one God because the community of divine persons is so closely interconnected that, although they are three distinct persons, they nonetheless function as if they were a single

entity. One might think that if we were to consider a group of three human persons who exhibited these characteristics of necessary unity, volitional harmony, and love, it would likewise be hard to regard them as entirely distinct. And that is, of course, just the intuition that the view aims to elicit. Still, many regard the sort of unity just described as not strong enough to secure a respectable monotheism. Thus, some social trinitarians have attempted to give other accounts of what unifies the divine persons. Perhaps the most popular such account is the part-whole model. Moreland and William Lane Craig have argued that the relation between the persons of the Trinity can be thought of as analogous to the relation we might suppose to obtain between the three dog-like beings that compose Cerberus, the mythical guardian of the underworld. One might say that each of the three heads—or each of the three souls associated with the heads—is a fully canine individual, and yet there is only one being, Cerberus, with the full canine nature. At this point, therefore, it is natural to wonder what exactly it is that makes both proposals count as versions of social trinitarianism. Unfortunately, this is a question to which self-proclaimed social trinitarians have not given a very clear answer. However, this answer is less than fully illuminating. What is needed is some characterization of the common core underlying the diverse views that are generally regarded as versions of social trinitarianism. The following two theses seem to capture that core: One of the more serious problems is that it is inconsistent with the Nicene Creed. Likewise, the Creed says that Father and Son are consubstantial. This claim is absolutely central to the doctrine of the trinity, and the notion of consubstantiality lay at the very heart of the debates in the 4th Century C. But the three souls, or centers of consciousness, of the heads of Cerberus are not in any sense consubstantial. Other versions of the part-whole model raise further worries. A cube, for example, is a seventh thing in addition to its six sides; but we do not want to say that God is a fourth thing in addition to its three parts. The reason is that saying this forces a dilemma: Either God is a person, or God is not. If the former, then we have a quaternity rather than a trinity. If the latter, then we seem to commit ourselves to claims that are decidedly anti-theistic: Bad news either way, then. Thus, many are motivated to seek other models. Historically, the use of psychological analogies is especially associated with thinkers in the Latin-speaking West, particularly from Augustine onward. Augustine himself suggested several important analogies, as did others in the medieval Latin tradition. However, since our focus in this article is on more contemporary models, we will pass over these here and focus instead on two more recently developed psychological analogies.

Chapter 2 : The Resourceful Christian

The Resourceful Church Musician. We provide well-crafted and accessible resources to help church musicians serve their choirs and musicians with passion and excellence.

Dobel is assistant professor of political theory at the University of Michigan, Dearborn. This article appeared in the Christian Century October 12, , p. Copyright by the Christian Century Foundation and used by permission. Current articles and subscription information can be found at www.christiancentury.org. SUMMARY Any ecological ethic which takes into account both God and humanity must begin with the rejection of unbridled human sovereignty over the earth. Here are a few ethical considerations: Over half these books referenced an article by Lynn White, Jr. Dominion Over the Earth The ecological indictment of Christianity boils down to two somewhat contradictory assertions: In documenting the first indictment authors often cite Genesis 1: Thus Christianity separates both humanity and God from the earth and destroys the inherent sacredness of the earth. In some ways this stress undercuts the mandates of superiority and rule since it implies that humanity rules nothing but a fallen and contemptible orb. If the contempt, however, is tied to an antagonistic human domination and to the need of people to discipline their unruly bodies through work, it can provide an ethical framework to support the thoughtless and arrogant exploitation which is part of the ecology crisis. The thesis linking Calvinism with the rise of industrialization reflects this ambivalent world-hating but smug and exploitative attitude. The critics see modern science and technology along with notions of unbridled progress and exploitation emerging from this Judeo-Christian matrix. Looking for the Roots The attempt to discover historical roots is a dubious business at best, and in this case it borders on the ludicrous. Their thesis lacks a careful historical analysis of the intellectual and practical attitudes toward the earth and its use in the consciously Christian Middle Ages. They disregard the earth-centered ideals of the Christian Renaissance and its concern with the delicate limitations of the Great Chain of Being, and they pay little attention to the emergence of a peculiarly non-Christian deism and theism which defined God in the 17th and 18th centuries to accommodate a newly secularized nature and new developments in science and trade. These critics neglect to mention the specifically Christian prohibitions which often made religion a detriment to economic and scientific development. Given, the unsoundness of the theory that blames Christianity for the environmental crisis, it is surprising that it has gained such remarkable currency. In light of this fact there are two distinct tasks which confront the Christian community. First, this thesis should be addressed in some detail, not only to show its flaws but to discover what ideas and practices the tradition can contribute to a concrete ecological program. Second, we must use the vast ethical and conceptual resources of the Judeo-Christian tradition to develop a God-centered ecological ethic which accounts for the sacredness of the earth without losing sight of human worth and justice. In addressing myself to this second task, I will try to develop appropriate responses to the following questions through textual exegesis of the Bible: What is the ethical status of the earth as an entity in creation? What is the proper relation of humanity to the earth and its resources? Although it is hard to discover the enduring sacredness of anything in a totally secularized world, we must keep several points in mind about these calls. First, all cultures, regardless of religion, have abused or destroyed large areas of the world either because of economic or population pressures or from simple ignorance. Second, the ethical consequences of the new nature worship, neopanthemism and the militant assertion of the equality of all creaturehood pose grave problems for establishing any prior claims of worth or inherent dignity for human beings. The more undifferentiated God and the world become, the harder it is to define individual humans as worthwhile with specific claims to social justice and care. Third, a sort of mindless ecological imperative based upon such notions is ultimately reactionary and antihuman, as well as anti-Christian. There are fundamental ethical differences between plants and animals and between animals and human beings. To resort simplistically to militantly pro-earth and antiprogress positions misses the vital Christian and humanistic point that our sojourn upon the earth is not yet completed and that we must continue to work unflinchingly toward social justice and the well-being of all people. The unique contribution a Christian ecology can make to the earth is the assertion that we can insist on a reasonable harmony with our world without abandoning our

commitment to social justice for all members of our unique and self-consciously alienated species. We can love and respect our environment without obliterating all ethical and theological distinctions, and without denying the demand that we cautiously but steadily use the earth for the benefit of all humanity. In direct ethical terms God created the earth, and in distributive-justice terms it belongs to him: What kind of world did God create? The answer has two dimensions: As a product of nature the world was created as a law-bound entity. Things coexist in intricate and regulated harmony the basic postulate of science, mythology and reason. Although we have a world of laws, it is also a world of bounty and harmony. This world abounds in life and is held together in a seamless web maintained by God-willed laws. In love and freedom he created the world and valued it as good. All the creatures of the world also share in this goodness I Tim. The world, in its bounty and multiplicity of life, is independently good and ought to be respected as such. As an independent good, the earth possesses an autonomous status as an ethical and covenanted entity. The prophets, Isaiah especially, constantly address the earth and describe its independent travail. Paul describes the turmoil and travail of the earth as a midwife of all creation and redemption Rom. The earth must be regarded as an autonomous ethical entity bound not just by the restraints of physical law but also by respect for its inherent goodness and the covenanted limitations placed upon our sojourn. One fact is of outstanding moral relevance: Jeremiah summarizes it quite succinctly: For an ecological ethic this fact cannot be ignored. The resources and environment of the earth are not ours in any sovereign or unlimited sense; they belong to someone else. This gift does not, however, grant sovereign control. No one generation of people possesses the earth. This point is central to the Judeo-Christian response to the world. The world is given to all. Its heritage is something of enduring value designed to benefit all future generations. Those who receive such a gift and benefit from it are duty-bound to conserve the resources and pass them on for future generations to enjoy. There are some fairly clear principles that direct our covenanted responsibilities toward the earth. Our covenanted relations to the earth -- and for that matter, to all human beings -- must be predicated upon the recognition and acceptance of the limits of reality. Abiding by the covenant means abiding by the laws of nature, both scientific and moral. Knowledge of limits, especially of the intricacy of the ecosystems, makes humility and care a much more natural response. The transgression of limits usually brings either unknown or clearly dangerous consequences and ought to influence all actions with a singular sense of caution. Humility and respect do not mean simple awe, or withdrawal from all attempts to use or improve the bounty we are given. At the very least, they lead to the loss of arrogant ignorance which leads us to pursue policies in contradiction to the clear limits and laws of nature and particular ecosystems. The Stewardship Imperative The New Testament distills these notions and adds a strong activist imperative with its account of stewardship. This activist element is a vital alternative to some of the more extreme ethical positions in reactionary ecological ethics. The parable of the good steward in Luke We must know the limits and laws of the world in order to use them wisely. Our actions must be guided, in part, by concerns for future generations. Above all, we must never knowingly exhaust or ruin what has been given to us. If doing so is absolutely necessary to sustain life, then equity demands that we must leave some equally accessible and beneficial legacy to replace what has been exhausted. The parable of the talents makes it abundantly clear that we who are entrusted with his property will be called to account for our obligation to improve the earth. The stewardship imperative assumes that the moral and ecological constraints are respected, and it adds the obligation to distribute the benefits justly. An Informed Humility The lessons are clear. Any ecological ethic which takes into account both God and humanity and does not reduce both to some extension of undifferentiated nature must begin with a rejection of the unbridled sovereignty of humanity over the earth. In this rejection is the recognition that all work upon the earth must be informed by a clear understanding of and respect for the earth as an autonomous and valuable entity and the laws of nature on which the bounty of the earth depends. These are necessary but by no means sufficient within the Judeo-Christian tradition. For the earth, while it possesses its own moral autonomy, is not God and must not be confused as such. Our own relation to it must be predicated upon a careful understanding that earth and its resources are for any generation a restricted gift held in trust for future generations. We must never lose sight of the fact that a just and informed humility provides the frame-work for a working relationship with the earth.

Chapter 3 : Christian News, The Christian Post

The World Resourceful Christian Leaders' Association (a.k.a) "The World Christian Leaders" is a Global Christian Advisory Council and Research Institute to Christian organizations, groups and ministers of the gospel, geared towards shepherding the flocks, especially in respect to guidance in times of perplexity and distress.

The Bible Family International is an inter-denominational, non-profit, faith-based Christian organization for in-depth educational research, intellectual development and Data-bank Information Generator made available for Christians worldwide. It is a platform for united ministerial excellence as well as a Christian family that delights in the principles, doctrine and perfect nature of Christ 2 Tim3: It champions the cause of justice, equity and unity in the body of Christ Is. The Bible Family International comprises of: The Bible Family International is therefore poised to undertake the development of a virile family "an extension of the body of Christ, thus bringing transformation and restoration to her, to the praise and glory of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. They were prayerfully chosen to serve this high calling as well as tap into their global initiatives for the advancement of our mandate. The vision of The Bible Family International is to reveal the supremacy and authority of the Bible so that the word of eternal truth being the only foundational and fundamental basis for Christian doctrine Hosea 4: To unravel, advocate, counsel, enlighten and teach the grounded word of eternal truth, so that men will be found faithful and rooted in the word of God the Bible Since this is the only means of attaining eternal salvation Eph. To achieve the above vision and mission, The Bible Family International, shall: These shall also be pursued through education, research, conferences, seminars, workshops, fellowship, outreaches, publications, and networking in all nations of the world, with a view to fostering global spiritual growth in individuals, families, churches and organizations based on the Word of eternal truth The Bible. Furthermore, the family is charged with the task of promoting the gifts and talents of her members who must be men and women of faith and integrity, and have distinguished themselves in their different areas of calling. To uphold the authority of the Word of God and follow same as a guide for authentic Christian doctrine. In realization of the eleventh-hour end-time great commission Mk. We believe that there is only one God, eternally existing in three personalities: We believe in the Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, His virgin birth, death, bodily resurrection and ascension unto glory. We believe that the only means of being cleansed from sin is through repentance and faith in the precious blood of Jesus Christ. To explore and expose the mysteries and wonders in the Bible through in-depth study and research; thus, providing an opportunity for acquiring the knowledge of the Word of eternal truth and its doctrine 2Tim. Also, to help in biblical interpretations, for the assurance of salvation among believers 2 Pet. This is done in order to embrace the word of eternal truth Jn. Through this way, believers will be able to rise up to the challenges and responsibilities of the mandate given to them in Christ. To uphold the unquestionable truth of the Word of God through provision of scriptural basis; embracing justice, equity, reproofs, corrections, instructions and including solution to problems of all ages. According to the book of John 1: Inspire those who need them, thus keeping the charge of 1 Tim. Publishing of Bible-based manuals. Its content is generated through researches, conferences, outreaches, fellowships, seminars and workshops; covering all the authentic teachings that lead to eternal salvation. It will also address the contentious and insensitive doctrinal issues dividing Christendom with the aim of resolving them in order to promote the unity of Christianity. Publishing an annual devotional titled Authentic Christian Life. This annual devotional is Bible-based and Holy Spirit inspired devotional manual, for everyday spiritual guide. For the purpose of: The manual is meant to be a handbook that projects Bible-based challenges for everyday guide. In this way, the irreproachable and greatly inspired Bible-Based Manual when sincerely believed and applied daily will work the miracle of cleansing the souls and re-ordering the steps of erring Christians. This is so because, through the word of God, God reveals Himself to man 1 Jn. Establishment of faith-based tertiary institution which will provide primarily, qualitative, entrepreneurial and technology-based education driven by in-depth educational research in line with those of the developed countries of the world and the establishment of The Bible Family Seminary an online and off-line programmes for the propagation of the Gospel. A reformatory centres, being a panacea to problems regarding to schools.

Thereby stimulating love and care in our teaching and learning processes and to increase the value of education. This is because a healthy nation is a wealthy nation. Christian Association of Co-operative Partners. It also includes the association of cooperative friends of the family.

Chapter 5 : Paper Santa Hat Christmas Ornament - The Resourceful Mama

This setting for two-part (optional divisi) chorus will fit most any worship service. It's conservative vocal range and simple, yet elegant, style makes it perfect for the smaller adult chorus.

Here are some of the things that truly resourceful people do. They bend the rules. Rules exist for a reason. But when rules and tradition hold back progress, a truly resourceful entrepreneur decides that progress wins. They look for the common good. Resourceful people recognize that they need help. At the same time, while there are times when you do need to apologize, make sure that you do so only for true offenses; never apologize for your success. They burn their ships. Nothing focuses the mind and pushes you to look for innovative solutions like realizing you have no Plan B. Resourceful people turn challenges into advantages. They play a few hands at once. Have you read *The Great Escape*, or at least seen the s movie? They realized the Nazis had a pretty good chance of finding any escape tunnel they dug, so they increased the odds of success by digging three of them. A plan might not work out, so really resourceful people are always working on multiple plans. They dare to ask for what they need. This one is so simple, and yet so many people self-select out of success because they are afraid to ask for the things they need. A few years ago, I was writing for a newspaper in Washington, and I decided to put together an investment group to try to buy the entire company. In retrospect, it was kind of a crazy idea. However, the experience and the contacts I made in the process led to many other opportunities. Want to read more, make suggestions, or even be featured in a future column? Contact me and sign up for my weekly email.

Chapter 6 : Read & Study The Bible - Daily Verse, Scripture by Topic, Stories

The whole dispensation of the Spirit, the whole economy of grace in Christ Jesus, the whole of our spiritual lives, and the whole of the health, growth, and strength of the church has been laid down, provided for, and secured in the New Covenant.

Chapter 7 : Grow in Faith with Daily Christian Living Articles

This Paper Santa Hat Christmas Ornament is an inexpensive and easy craft kids can make and hang on your Christmas tree to enjoy for years to come. The Resourceful Mama Home.

Chapter 8 : calendrierdelascience.com: The Bible, Bible Study, Christian Books

Christian news on The Christian Post, the largest Christian newspaper in the world featuring world Christian news, Christian news sites, and religious news.

Chapter 9 : Christianity - Faith in God, Jesus Christ - Christian Living, Trivia

Christian living resources and Bible study to encourage your walk with Jesus Christ. calendrierdelascience.com aims to offer the most compelling biblically-based content to Christians on their walk with Jesus.