

1-1-2000

PH 501 Philosophy of Christian Religion

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PH 501 A
PHILOSOPHY OF CHRISTIAN RELIGION
FALL 2000
Jerry L. Walls

I. OBJECTIVE

To learn to love God more fully and become more thoughtful and articulate witnesses to Christian truth by:

- A. gaining a deeper understanding of how philosophical convictions impact theological beliefs, and vice-versa;
- B. gaining some competence in analyzing and criticizing philosophical arguments.
- C. exploring the basic issues in philosophy of religion. In particular, our discussion will revolve around Eight Great Questions.
 - 1. What is the nature of freedom and responsibility?
 - 2. How and mind and body related?
 - 3. What makes religious language meaningful?
 - 4. Are there good extra-biblical reasons to believe God exists?
 - 5. If God is all good and all powerful, why is there so much evil?
 - 6. Are faith and reason compatible?
 - 7. Is it rational to believe in miracles in the modern/postmodern world?
 - 8. Can life after death be defended philosophically?

II. REQUIREMENTS

- A. Most of the class time will be given to lectures; the remaining part will be spent in discussion. It is required that students will read all assignments to facilitate understanding of lectures and participation in discussions. A reading report will be due at the end of the term. If less than 100% of the reading is done, it will affect your grade adversely.
- B. Five essays will be assigned over the term. Each will be 4-5 pages (**MAXIMUM**), typed, double spaced, number pages, and stapled with a cover sheet. (**NO paper clips and NO folders or covers. Name, date and SPO # in upper right hand corner**) Aim for clarity and organization in your argument. Interact with readings, but avoid plagiarism like the plague! Give attention to spelling and grammar.
- C. Class attendance is required. You are expected to take your own notes. An attendance report will be due at the end of the term. Two absences are permitted. If you are absent more than two times, it will affect your grade unless all are excused.

III. TEXTS

- A. William Hasker, Metaphysics.
- B. Michael Peterson et al., Reason and Religious Belief: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion, 2nd edition.
- C. Michael Peterson et. al., Philosophy of Religion: Selected Readings (*Readings*)

IV. DAILY ASSIGNMENTS

September 5	Introduction	
7	Hasker	13-28; 19-123; 29-44
12		45-65
14	Peterson	65-80 166-188
19	<i>Readings</i>	1-5; 7-17 351-356
21	Peterson	145-150 85-114
26	<i>Readings</i>	167-189; 198-210; 221-227
28	Peterson	18-41
October 3	<i>Readings</i>	20-29; 41-54
5	Peterson	116-145
10	<i>Readings</i>	231-242; 254-266
12		266-280
17		281-306
19	Peterson	43-60
24	<i>Readings</i>	65-79; 63-65
26	Peterson	146-165
31	<i>Readings</i>	309- 320; 322-336
November 2		337-346
7	Peterson <i>Readings</i>	190-210 389-398
9		399-416
14	Peterson	212-236
16	<i>Readings</i>	421-462
November 20-24		READING WEEK
28	Peterson	237- 257

30		259-277
		302-331
7	Conclusion	