

# WORLDVIEW AND SPIRITUALITY TH 2C03

McMaster Divinity College  
James C. Peterson, B.A., M.Div., M.A., Ph.D.  
[peterso@mcmaster.ca](mailto:peterso@mcmaster.ca)

Fall 2010 (Term 1)  
Monday 7:00-8:50pm  
(905) 525-9140 ext 23052

## Catalogue

Developing a Christian worldview and spirituality, including its implications for life in community and wider society.

## Description

The McMaster University seal prominently displays a quote from Christian scripture that “It is in Christ that all things hold together.” This affirmation is central to a Christian worldview. In this course we will study the characteristics of Christian worldview and spirituality. The implications for our lives in community and wider society will be of particular interest.

## Course Objectives

In this course you will have the opportunity to develop

### **Knowing**

How pervasively worldview and spirituality shape our living  
The varied Christian tradition of worldview and spirituality, with particular interest in the precursors and current expressions of worldview and spirituality in the McMaster Divinity College community  
Contemporary movements and challenges in worldview and spirituality

### **Being**

Intentional in worldview and way of life  
Open with discernment to learning from other perspectives  
Centered on what matters most

### **Doing**

Articulate with sensitivity and clarity both your worldview and spirituality, and that of others  
Readily recognize and evaluate plausibility structures and lines/webs of argument  
Distinguish contextualization from syncretism  
Engage more effectively with community and wider society

## Required Texts

Ruth Haley Barton, *Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership: seeking God in the crucible of ministry*, Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2008.

Richard Foster, *Streams of Living Water: Celebrating the Great Traditions of the Christian Faith*, HarperSanFrancisco, 2001.

Kelly Monroe Kullberg, *Finding God Beyond Harvard: The Quest for Veritas*, Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006.

John Stackhouse, *Humble Apologetics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.

The required textbooks are available from the College's book service- READ On Bookstore, Room 218, McMaster Divinity College. For advance purchase, you may contact READ On Bookstores, 304 The East Mall, Suite 100, Etobicoke, ON M9C 5K1: phone 416-620-2934; fax 416-622-2308; email books@readon.ca.

The textbooks will begin our study. Your own reading beyond will be crucial to gaining adequate coverage and depth.

### **Assignments and Evaluation**

#### **Point Tabulation**

Consistent and thoughtful participation in class, up to 12 points

Class handout and presentation on assigned date, up to 12 points

Team challenge presentation on assigned date, up to 24 points

Research paper emailed by 7 pm December 3, up to 24 points

Final exam 7 pm December 13, up to 28 points

#### **Individual Presentation Instructions**

From the list below select and confirm one contemporary leader on the first day of class. Read at least one piece by that author and prepare for the class a one sheet front and back description of her most important contributions and the role of Christ in that person and her work. Including a picture inset is appreciated. Email the description to the TA by Monday noon before the class so that it may be duplicated as a one page- two sided handout. If you do not meet the deadline you are responsible to provide enough copies for all class members. At the class briefly highlight in two minutes what you think is most important and interesting about your figure's evident worldview and vocational contribution.

Anthropology: Irving Hexham

Apologetics: Ravi Zacharias

Astronomy: Jennifer Wiseman, Owen Gingerich, Michael M. DeRobertis, Robert Jastrow

Biochemistry: Abraham Vema

Business: William Pollard, Truett Cathy

Chemistry: David Humphries, Henry F. Schaeffer III  
Economics: Glenn Loury, Kenneth G. Elzinga  
Chemical Engineering: Chul Park  
Computer science: Donald Knuth  
Electrical Engineering Entrepreneur: H. Douglas Barber  
Environment: Calvin DeWitt  
Evolution: Denis O. Lamoureux  
Film Director: Tom Shadyac, Michael Landon Jr.  
First Nations Leader: Ray Aldred  
Geography: Olav Slaymaker  
Genetics: Francis Collins  
Government: Steven Harper, Condoleeza Rice, Jimmy Carter  
History: George Marsden, Mark Noll, William Shea, Grant Wacker  
Journalism: Lorna Dueck, Ann Rodgers  
Law: Ian Hunter, Stephen Carter, Antonin Scalia  
Literature: Dennis Richard Danielson, David L. Jeffrey  
Mechanical Engineering: Walter L. Bradley  
Medical Physics: David Chettle  
Music: Ben Heppner  
Neurology: David Chechetto, Malcolm Jeeves  
Novelist: John Grisham  
Nuclear Physics: Ian Hutchinson, Vinoth Ramachandra, Robert Kaita  
Nuclear weapons technology: Ken Touryan  
Philosophy: Dallas Willard, Alvin Plantinga, Richard Swinburne  
Physics: Robert Mann, William Phillips, Arthur Schalow, John Polkinghorne, John William  
McConkey, Charles Townes  
Political Science: Glenn Tinder, Robert George  
Psychology: Paul Vitz  
Psychotherapy: Armand Nicholi  
Research University President: David T. Barnard, Nathan Hatch  
Science and Theology: Nancey Murphy, Alister McGrath  
Social Service Organizations: Jonathan Reckford, James Reese, Dave Toycen  
Sociology: Mary Stewart Van Leeuwen, James Davidson Hunter  
Theology: Ruth Padilla DeBorst, Clark Pinnock, Miroslav Volf

### **Team Presentation Instructions**

At the second class we will assign each course member to a team. Your team is to develop the strongest argument in favour of one of the following challenges and a response to it. The presentations will be scheduled and timed when course numbers are settled. As with the other presentation, a handout is helpful. Submit it to the course TA by noon Monday before the presentation for duplication, one or two pages, one or two sided (for a maximum of four pages of information). After noon, the team is responsible to provide enough copies for all class members.

Are Freud and Feuerbach right that God is just a projection of wish fulfillment?

Is Marx correct that religion is a human made opiate foisted upon the masses?

Wouldn't I be Hindu if I grew up in India?

Why are these books counted as scripture and not others?

Jesus was a great prophet but he could not be God, nor would God allow him to be crucified.

Does the cross indicate that God is vindictive or abusive?  
Is Hell consistent with God's revealed character?  
Does God condemn sincere believers of other religions?  
Doesn't the suffering of the innocent show God as either weak or uncaring?

Does God commend holy war, crusades, and just war?  
Does Christian scripture support slavery?  
Does Christian scripture support the subservience of women?  
Doesn't science render Christian faith untenable?  
Does Christian faith destroy the environment?  
I am spiritual, why bother with church?  
If I become a Christian, will that make me happy?  
Shouldn't religious views be excluded from public life?

## **Paper Instructions**

In one or two paragraphs describe a situation that you have directly experienced that involved a conflict between your worldview/spirituality with a contrasting one. In the first paragraph of your analysis that follows, state what your paper will accomplish. This is your thesis. A thesis is not a topic or an area of exploration. It is an assertion that you will attempt to prove. Also in the first paragraph of analysis state how you will prove your thesis, and why it is worth the attention of you and your reader. Stating and evaluating alternatives with fairness will strengthen your essay. Do not merely repeat material presented in this class or another course. This is your opportunity to pursue in more depth an investigation of particular importance to you.

There is not a required number of references, however, it is unlikely that you will be the first person ever to reflect on your theme. It is to your advantage to learn from others rather than starting from scratch. Your analysis will be stronger for it. Whoever you learn from as you think through your issue should receive credit.

The paper should be typed, single spaced, well presented, page numbered, and no more than 2500 words in a Word format. You will be given in class an email address to send it to. A receipt will be sent in return. You are welcome to turn the paper in as soon as it is complete. The paper is due by 7 pm on December 3. Beginning after 7 pm December 3 and then each additional day late the paper loses one letter gradation per twenty-four hours or fraction of a new day such as A to A- or B+ to B. All papers should be submitted according to the *Chicago Manual of Style* or the MacDiv Style Guide, which can be found on the web at:  
<http://www.macdiv.ca/students/documents/MacStyleGuideApr1508.pdf>

As an important part of clarity in your own mind and communication to others, please use standard English. Note the following checklist:

*Block quote any quotation more than three lines long. Block quotes are single spaced with indented margins and no quotation marks.*

*Use footnotes. They may be in any standard format provided all of the relevant information is included and you are consistent throughout the paper. The Chicago Manual of Style is the most widely used authority for works in theology and philosophy.*

*Book and journal titles receive italics. Article titles are placed in quotes.*

*Do not use no double negative.*

*Verbs has to agree with their subjects.*

*Make each pronoun agree with their antecedent*

*Do not write run on sentences since they are hard to follow and understand for those who are reading your thoughts and seeking to gain from your insights born of experience and careful reflection in this academic endeavor we rightfully treasure highly, as well we should.*

*About them sentence fragments.*

*Just between you and I, case is important too.*

*Try to not often, or maybe even never, split infinitives.*

*Ones apostrophe's should be used correctly.*

*Don't use contractions in a formal essay.*

*Corect speling iz eesencheal. Withot it yure righting iz hard to reed and givs the empresheon that yu do not no wat yu ar doeeng.*

## **Academic Honesty**

Academic dishonesty is a serious offence in the academic world that may take any number of forms, including plagiarism, the submission of work that is not one's own or for which previous credit has been obtained, and/or unauthorized collaboration with other students. Academic dishonesty can result in severe consequences, e.g., failure of the assignment, failure of the course, a notation on the transcript, and/or suspension or expulsion from the College.

Students are responsible to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. Please refer to the Divinity College Statement on Academic Honesty at [www.macdiv.ca/regs/honesty.php](http://www.macdiv.ca/regs/honesty.php).

## **Gender Inclusive Language**

McMaster Divinity College uses inclusive language for human beings in worship services, student written materials, and all its publications. In reference to biblical texts, the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God should be respected. The NRSV and TNIV are examples of the use of inclusive language for human beings. It is expected that inclusive language will be used in chapel services and all MDC assignments.

## **Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment is a violation of the integrity of persons in the form of unsolicited, unwelcome, verbal or physical behavior, which discriminates on the basis of gender about a person's body, attire, gender, marital status or economic status. Among faculty, staff, and students, sexual harassment of any kind will not be tolerated.

## **Class Schedule**

Depending upon class understanding and interest, class content may at times be ahead or behind the following schedule.

### **September 13**

Welcome, introduction, and syllabus

Recognizing Worldview and Spirituality

Study Stackhouse introduction-chapter one.

### **September 20 Christian Traditions of Worldview and Spirituality**

Study Foster text.

**September 27 The McMaster Divinity College Tradition**

Study the rest of Stackhouse

**October 4, 18, 25, November 8, 15, 22, Challenges**

Study Kullberg text

**November 29 Church and Culture**

An alternative society or seeking to change society

Study Barton text.

**December 3**

Course paper in email before 7 pm.

**December 6**

Review and last questions

**December 13**

Final exam

**Suggested Bibliography to start further investigation**

If the book is available at Mills, its call number follows. If you choose to checkout a Mills book please be careful to return it quickly since fellow class members may well be looking for it.

Donald G. Bloesch, *Spirituality Old & New: Recovering Authentic Spiritual Life*, Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2007

F. F. Bruce, *The New Testament Documents: Are They Reliable?* (Leicester: InterVarsity Press; Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1988). Mills call # BS 2332 .B7 1988

Paul Chamberlain, *Talking About Good and Bad without getting Ugly: A Guide to Moral Persuasion*, Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2005

Colin Chapman, *Cross and Crescent: Responding to the Challenge of Islam*, InterVarsity Press, 2007. Mills BP 172.C418 2007. Mills call # BP 172 .C418 2007

Francis Collins, *The Language of God: A Scientist Presents Evidence for Belief*, Free Press, 2006. Mills BL 240.3 .C66 2006. Mills call # BL 240.3 .C66 2006

William Lane Craig, *Reasonable Faith: Christian Truth and Apologetics*, Wheaton: Crossway, 1994. Mills BT 1102 .C665 1994. Mills call # BT 1102 .C665 1994. Also available as an e-book

Paul Rhodes Eddy and Gregory A. Boyd, *The Jesus Legend: A Case for the Historical Reliability of the Synoptic Jesus Tradition*, Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007. Mills BS 2555.52 .E33 2007. Mills call # BS 2555.52 .E33 2007

Anthony Flew, *There Is a God: How the World's Most Notorious Atheist Changed His Mind*, New York: HarperOne, 2007

Richard Foster and Gayle Beebe, *Longing for God: seven paths of Christian devotion*, Downer's Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2009

Robert Garcia, *Is Goodness without God Good Enough? A debate on faith, secularism, and ethics*, Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2009. Mills call # BJ47.I84 2009

John F. Haught, *God and the New Atheism: A Critical Response to Dawkins, Harris, and Hitchens*, Louisville: WestminsterJohnKnox Press, 2008

Colin Hemer, *The Book of Acts in the Setting of Hellenic History* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1989). Mills call # BS 2625.2 .H396

Christopher Hitchens, *God is not Great: How Religion Poisons Everything*, Hachette Book Group, 2007. Mills call # BL 2775.3 .H58 2007

Paul D. Janz, *Command of Grace: A New Theological Apologetics*, T & T Clark, 2009. Mills call # BT 701.3 .J36 2009

Charles Kraft, *Anthropology for Christian Witness*, Orbis Books, 1997

Kelly Munroe Kullberg, *Finding God at Harvard: Spiritual Journeys of Thinking Christians*, Downers Grove: IVP, 2007. Mills call # LD 2134 .F56 2007

Kelly Monroe Kullberg, *Finding God Beyond Harvard: The Quest for Veritas*, InterVarsity Press, 2006

Denis O. Lamoureux, *Evolutionary Creation: A Christian Approach to Evolution*, Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2008

Sherwood Lingenfelter, *Leading Cross-Culturally*, Baker Academic, 2008. Mills call # BV 652.1 .L57 2008

David A. Livermore, *Cultural Intelligence: Improving Your CQ to Engage Our Multicultural World*, Baker Academic, 2009. Mills call # BR 115 .C8 L58 2009

Ben Lowe, *Green Revolution: Coming Together to Care for Creation*, Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2009

Alister McGrath, *A Passion for Truth: The Intellectual Coherence of Evangelicalism*, Downers Grove: IVP, 1997. Mills call # BR 1640 .M42 1996

Alister E. McGrath and Joanna Collicutt McGrath, *The Dawkins Delusion? Atheist Fundamentalism and the Denial of Divine*, Downers Grove, Ill: IVP Books, 2007

Alister McGrath, *The Order of Things: Explorations in Scientific Theology*, Oxford: Blackwell, 2006. Mills BT 75.3 .M335 2006. Mills call # BT 75.3 .M335 2006

Donald E. Miller, *Global Pentecostalism: The New Era of Christian Social Engagement*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007. Mills call # BR 1644 .M55 2007

Terry Muck and Frances Adeney, *Christianity Encountering World Religions*, Baker Academic, 2009. Mills call # BV 2063 .M73 2009

David G. Myers, *A Friendly Letter to Skeptics and Atheists: Musings on Why God is Good and Faith isn't Evil*, San Francisco: JosseyBass, 2008. Mills call # BR 128 .A8 M94 2008

Leslie Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989. Mills call # BR 115 .C8 N468 1989

Mark A. Noll, *What Happened to Christian Canada?* Vancouver: Regent College Publishing, 2007. Mills call # BR570.N65 2007

Alan Padgett and Steve Wilkins, *Christianity and Western Thought, Volume 3: Journey to Postmodernity in the Twentieth Century*, Downer's Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2009

Clark Pinnock, *A Wideness in God's Mercy*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992. Mills call # BR 127 .P56 1992

Alvin Plantinga and Michael Tooley, *Knowledge of God* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008). Mills call # BT 103 .P58 2008. Also available as an e-book

George A. Rawlyk, *Is Jesus your personal saviour? In Search of Canadian Evangelicalism in the 1990s*, McGill-Queens University Press, 2003. Mills call # BR 1642 .C3 R385 1996 (also available as an e-book)

Sam Reimer, *Evangelicals and the Continental Divide: The Conservative Protestant Subculture in Canada and the United States* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2003). Mills call # BR 1642 .C2R44 2003

Bertrand Russel, *Why I Am Not A Christian*, Simon and Schuster 1957. Mills call # BL 2780 .R87 1993

James Sire, *Naming the Elephant: Worldview as a Concept or The Universe Next Door*, Downers Grove: IVP, 2004. Mills call # B 53 .S634 2004

John G. Stackhouse Jr, *Canadian Evangelicalism in the Twentieth Century: An Introduction to Its Character*, University of Toronto Press, 1993. Mills call # BR 1642 .C3 S73 1993

John G. Stackhouse Jr., *Humble Apologetics*, Oxford University Press, 2002. Mills call # BT 1103 .S73 2002

Rodney Stark, *The Victory of Reason: How Christianity led to Freedom, Capitalism, and Western Success*, Random House, 2006. Mills call # BR 115 .C5 S63 2005

Robert B. Stewart, editor, *The Future of Atheism: Alister McGrath and Daniel Dennett in Dialogue*, Fortress Press, 2008. Mills call # BR 128.A8 F87 2008

Lee Strobel, *The Case for Christ: A Journalist's Personal Investigation of the Evidence for Jesus*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998. Mills call # BT 202 .S82 1998

Richard Swinburne, *Was Jesus God?* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008). Mills call # BT

220 .S95 2008

Stephen Travis, *Christ and the Judgment of God: the Limits of Divine Retribution in New Testament Thought*, Hendrickson, 2009. Mills call # BT 180 .J8 T73 2009

Paul Vitz, *Faith of the Fatherless: The Psychology of Atheism*, Spence Publishing, 2000

John H. Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One*, IVP, 2009

Keith Ward, *God and the Philosophers*, Fortress Press, 2009. Mills call # BT 103 .W37 2009

Keith Ward, *Is Religion Dangerous?* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007. Mills call # BL 51 .W21 2007

William J. Webb, *Slaves, Women, and Homosexuals: Exploring the Hermeneutics of Cultural Analysis*, Downers Grove, ILL: InterVarsity Press, 2001. Mills call # BS 476 .W38 2001

Dallas Willard, "Living in the Vision of God," *Tell the Word*, 2005. Find the article at <http://www.dwillard.org/articles/artview.asp?artID=96>

Keith Yandell, *Buddhism*, Downers Grove: IVP, 2009

Ravi Zacharias, *Can Man Live Without God*, Nashville: W Publishing, 1994

*Congratulations* on completing Christian Worldview and Spirituality

This syllabus is for information only and remains the property of the professor. The syllabus is prepared with the best information available, but the professor reserves the right to change the content and format of the course.