

# WORLDVIEW AND SPIRITUALITY TH 2C03

McMaster Divinity College  
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Fall 2009 (Term 1)  
Thursday 1:30-3:20

## Catalog

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 scriptures that “In Christ all things hold together.” This affirmation is central to a Christian worldview. In this course we will study the characteristics of Christian worldview and resulting spirituality. The implications for our lives in community and wider society will be of particular interest. A Christian worldview includes a way of life.

## Course Objectives

In this course you will have the opportunity to develop

### **Knowing**

The pervasive shaping of worldview and spirituality  
Contemporary movements and challenges in worldview and spirituality  
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

### **Being**

Be a person who centers attention on what matters most  
Aware of and open with discernment to learning from other perspectives  
Developing an intentional worldview and way of life.

### **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*, InterVarsity Press, 2006.

John Stackhouse, *Humble Apologetics*, 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 10 points

Class handout and presentation on assigned date, up to 10 points

Team challenge presentation on assigned date, up to 20 points

Exam November 26, up to 30 points

Research paper emailed by 7 pm December 2, up to 30 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-page description of his/her most important contributions and the role of Christ in that person and his/her work. Email the description to the TA by Tuesday noon before the class so that it may be duplicated as a handout. At the class briefly highlight what you think is most important and interesting about your figure's evident worldview and vocational contribution.

Anthropology: Irving Hexham

Apologetics: Ravi Zacharias, John Stott, William Lane Craig

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

Biochemistry: Abraham Vema

Business: William Pollard, Truett Cathy

Chemistry: 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: Marguerite Van Die, 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  
 Music: Ben Heppner, Kevin Ramessar,  
 Neurology: David Chechetto, Malcolm Jeeves  
 Novelist: John Grisham  
 Nuclear Physics: Ian Hutchinson, Vinoth Ramachandra, Robert Kaita  
 Philanthropy: Bono  
 Philosophy: Basil Mitchel, Alvin Plantinga, Richard Swinburne, Dallas Willard, Nicholas  
 Wolterstorff  
 Physics: Robert Mann, William Phillips, Arthur Schalow, John Polkinghorne, William McConkey,  
 Charles Townes  
 Political Science: Rebekah Miles, Robert George,  
 Psychology: Paul Vitz, Robert Coles  
 Psychotherapy: Armand Nicholi  
 Science and Theology: Nancey Murphy, Alister McGrath  
 Social Service Organizations: James Reese, Jonathan Reckford, Dave Toycen  
 Sociology: Reginald Bibby, Rodney Stark, James Davidson Hunter, Mary Stewart Van Leeuwen  
 Technology Transfer: Ken Touryan  
 Theology: Ruth Padilla DeBorst, Clark Pinnock, Miroslav Volf  
 University Administration: David Barnard, Nathan Hatch

### **Team Presentation Instructions**

At the second class we will assign each course member to a team to develop the strongest argument in favour of one of the following challenges and a response to it. The presentations will be scheduled when course numbers are settled.

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?  
 Why are these books counted as scripture and not others?  
 Does God commend holy war, crusades, and just war?  
 What does the cross say about God's character?  
 Is Hell consistent with God's character?  
 Doesn't the suffering of the innocent show God as either weak or uncaring?

Does Christian scripture support the subservience of slaves and women?  
Does God condemn sincere believers of other religions?  
Doesn't science render Christian faith untenable?  
Has Christian faith led to destroying the environment?  
Should religious views be excluded from public policy debate?  
I am spiritual, why bother with church?  
If I became a Christian, I would have to give up too much.  
I do not want to be like Christians.  
If you grew up in India you would be Hindu.  
Will it make me happy?  
Why care about religion?

## **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 next paragraph state what your paper will accomplish. This is your thesis. It should be an assertion that you will attempt to prove. Also in the first paragraph state how you will prove your thesis, and why it is worth the attention of you and your reader. It is expected that you will analyze theological insights and issues at work in your case. With full explanation of your theological assumptions and application, describe what would be the appropriate course. Stating and evaluating alternatives with fairness will strengthen your essay. Do not merely repeat material presented in class. 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 Word or a PDF 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 2. Beginning after 7 pm December 2 and then each additional day late the paper loses one letter gradation per 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 empresheeon 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 10**

Welcome, introduction, and syllabus  
Recognizing Worldview and Spirituality  
Study Stackhouse introduction-chapter one.

### **September 17 Christian Traditions of Worldview and Spirituality**

Study Foster text.

### **September 24 The McMaster Divinity College Tradition**

Study the rest of Stackhouse

### **Challenges**

Study Kullberg text

## **November 19 Church and Culture**

As an alternative society  
Seeking to change society  
Study Barton text.

## **November 26 Exam**

### **December 2**

Course paper in email before 7 pm.

### **December 3**

Return and discuss exam. Last questions.

## **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.

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

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

William Lane Craig, *Reasonable Faith: Christian Truth and Apologetics*, Wheaton: Crossway, 1994. Mills BT 1102 .C665 1994.

Richard Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, Mariner Books, 2008. Mills BL 2775.3 .D39 2006.

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.

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.

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

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

Sherwood Lingenfelter, *Leading Cross-Culturally*, Baker Academic, 2009.

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

Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008.

Paul D. Janz, *Command of Grace: A New Theological Apologetics*, T & T Clark, 2009

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

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

David A. Livermore, *Cultural Intelligence: Improving Your CQ to Engage Our Multicultural World*, Baker Academic, 2009.

Alister McGrath, *A Passion for Truth: The Intellectual Coherence of Evangelicalism*, Downers Grove: IVP, 1997. Mills 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 BT 75.3 .M335 2006.

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

Terry Muck and Frances Adeney, *Christianity Encountering World Religions*, Baker Academic, 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 BR 128 .A8 M94 2008.

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

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

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

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

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

James Sire, *Naming the Elephant: Worldview as a Concept or The Universe Next Door*, Downers Grove: IVP, 2004. 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 BR 1642 .C3 S73 1993

John G. Stackhouse Jr, *Making the Best of It: Following Christ in the Real World*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

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

Robert B. Stewart, editor, *The Future of Atheism: Alister McGrath and Daniel Dennett in Dialogue*, Fortress Press, 2008. Mills 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.

Stephen Travis, *Christ and the Judgment of God: the Limits of Divine Retribution in New Testament Thought*, Hendrickson, 2009.

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

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

Keith Ward, *God and the Philosophers*, Fortress Press, 2009.

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

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

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.