

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Discussion Point – underline <u>three</u> you need clarification on AND which you couldn't decode yourself/with peers outside of class</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Explain what you need clarification with</b></p>
<p><b>Philosophy of Religion</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• comparison and evaluation of Plato's Form of the Good and Aristotle's Prime Mover</li> <li>• comparison and evaluation of Plato's reliance on reason (rationalism) and Aristotle's use of the senses (empiricism) in their attempts to make sense of reality</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• materialist critiques of dualism, and dualist responses to materialism</li> <li>• whether the concept of 'soul' is best understood metaphorically or as a reality</li> <li>• the idea that any discussion about the mind-body distinction is a category error</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• whether <i>a posteriori</i> or <i>a priori</i> is the more persuasive style of argument</li> <li>• whether or not teleological arguments can be defended against the challenge of 'chance'</li> <li>• whether cosmological arguments simply jump to the conclusion of a transcendent creator, without sufficient explanation</li> <li>• whether or not there are logical fallacies in these arguments that cannot be overcome</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• whether <i>a posteriori</i> or <i>a priori</i> is the more persuasive style of argument</li> <li>• whether or not existence can be treated as a predicate</li> <li>• whether or not the ontological argument justifies belief</li> <li>• whether or not there are logical fallacies in this argument that cannot be overcome</li> </ul>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• whether personal testimony or witness is enough to support the validity of religious experiences</li> <li>• whether or not corporate religious experiences might be considered more reliable or valid than individual experiences</li> <li>• whether or not religious experience provides a basis for belief in God or a greater power</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• whether or not Augustine’s view of the origins of moral and natural evils is enough to spare God from blame for evils in the world</li> <li>• whether or not the need to create a ‘vale of soul-making’ can justify the existence or extent of evils</li> <li>• which of the logical or evidential aspects of the problem of evil pose the greater</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• whether or not it is possible, or necessary, to resolve the apparent conflicts between divine attributes</li> <li>• whether Boethius, Anselm or Swinburne provides the most useful understanding of the relationship between divinity and time</li> <li>• whether or not any of these thinkers are successful in resolving the problems of divine knowledge, benevolence, justice, eternity and human free will</li> <li>• whether the attributes should be understood as subject to the limits of logical possibility or of divine self-limitation</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• comparison of the usefulness of the above approaches to religious language</li> <li>• whether or not the apophatic way enables effective understanding of theological discussion</li> <li>• whether or not Aquinas’ analogical approaches support effective expression of language about God</li> <li>• whether or not religious discourse is comprehensible if religious language is understood as symbolic</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• whether or not any version of the verification principle successfully renders religious language as meaningless</li> <li>• whether or not any participant in the falsification symposium presented a convincing approach to the understanding of religious language</li> <li>• a comparison of the ideas of Aquinas and Wittgenstein, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• whether a cognitive approach (such as Aquinas’s thinking on analogy) or a non-cognitive approach (such as the language games concept of Wittgenstein) present better ways of making sense of religious language</li> <li>• the influence of non-cognitive approaches on the interpretation of religious texts</li> <li>• how far Aquinas’ analogical view of theological language remains valuable in philosophy of religion</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

## Religion and Ethics

- whether or not natural law provides a helpful method of moral decision-making
- whether or not a judgement about something being good, bad, right or wrong can be based on its success or failure in achieving its *telos*
- whether or not the universe as a whole is designed with a *telos*, or human nature has an orientation towards the good
- whether or not the doctrine of double effect can be used to justify an action, such as killing someone as an act of self-defence

- whether or not situation ethics provides a helpful method of moral decision-making
- whether or not an ethical judgement about something being good, bad, right or wrong can be based on the extent to which, in any given situation, *agape* is best served
- whether Fletcher's understanding of *agape* is really religious or whether it means nothing more than wanting the best for the person involved in a given situation
- whether or not the rejection of absolute rules by situation ethics makes moral decision-making entirely individualistic and subjective

- whether or not Kantian ethics provides a helpful method of moral decision-making
- whether or not an ethical judgement about something being good, bad, right or wrong can be based on the extent to which duty is best served
- whether or not Kantian ethics is too abstract to be applicable to practical moral decision-making
- whether or not Kantian ethics is so reliant on reason that it unduly rejects the importance of other factors, such as sympathy, empathy and love in moral decision-making

- whether or not utilitarianism provides a helpful method of moral decision-making
- whether or not an ethical judgement about something being good, bad, right or wrong can be based on the extent to which, in any given situation, utility is best served
- whether or not it is possible to measure good or pleasure and then reach a moral decision

- the application of **natural law** and **situation ethics** to euthanasia
- whether or not the religious concept of sanctity of life has any meaning in twenty- first century medical ethics
- whether or not a person should or can have complete autonomy over their own life and decisions made about it

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• whether or not there is a moral difference between medical intervention to end a patient's life and medical non-intervention to end a patient's life</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the application of <b>Kantian ethics</b> and <b>utilitarianism</b> to business ethics</li> <li>• whether or not the concept of corporate social responsibility is nothing more than 'hypocritical window-dressing' covering the greed of a business intent on making profits</li> <li>• whether or not human beings can flourish in the context of capitalism and consumerism</li> <li>• whether globalisation encourages or discourages the pursuit of good ethics as the foundation of good business</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• whether or not what is meant by the word 'good' is the defining question in the study of ethics</li> <li>• whether or not ethical terms such as good, bad, right and wrong: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have an objective factual basis that makes them true or false in describing something</li> <li>• reflect only what is in the mind of the person using such terms</li> <li>• can be said to be meaningful or meaningless</li> </ul> </li> <li>• whether or not, from a common sense approach, people just know within themselves what is good, bad, right and wrong</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• comparison between Aquinas and Freud: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o on the concept of guilt</li> <li>o on the presence or absence of God within the workings of the conscience and super-ego</li> <li>o on the process of moral decision-making</li> </ul> </li> <li>• whether conscience is linked to, or separate from, reason and the unconscious mind</li> <li>• whether conscience exists at all or is instead an umbrella term covering various factors involved in moral decision-making, such as culture, environment, genetic predisposition and education</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• whether or not religious beliefs and practices concerning sex and relationships have a continuing role in the area of sexual ethics</li> <li>• whether choices in the area of sexual behaviour should be entirely private and personal, or whether they should be subject to societal norms and legislation</li> <li>• whether normative theories are useful in what they might say about sexual ethics</li> </ul>	

## Developments in Christian thought

- whether or not Augustine's teaching on a historical Fall and Original Sin is wrong
- whether or not Augustine is right that sin means that humans can never be morally good
- whether or not Augustine's view of human nature is pessimistic or optimistic
- whether or not there is a distinctive human nature

- whether or not God's judgement takes place immediately after death or at the end of time
- whether or not hell and heaven are eternal
- whether or not heaven is the transformation and perfection of the whole of creation
- whether or not purgatory is a state through which everyone goes

- whether or not God can be known through reason alone
- whether or not faith is sufficient reason for belief in God's existence
- whether or not the Fall has completely removed all natural human knowledge of God
- whether or not natural knowledge of God is the same as revealed knowledge of God
- whether or not belief in God's existence is sufficient to put one's trust in him

- whether or not Jesus was only a teacher of wisdom
- whether or not Jesus was more than a political liberator
- whether or not Jesus' relationship with God was very special or truly unique
- whether or not Jesus thought he was divine

- whether or not Christian ethics are distinctive
- whether or not Christian ethics are personal or communal
- whether or not the principle of love is sufficient to live a good life
- whether or not the Bible is a comprehensive moral guide

- whether or not Christians should practise civil disobedience
- whether or not it is possible always to know God's will
- whether or not Bonhoeffer puts too much emphasis on suffering

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• whether or not Bonhoeffer's theology has relevance today</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• whether or not if Christ is the 'truth' there can be any other means of salvation</li> <li>• whether or not a loving God would ultimately deny any human being salvation</li> <li>• whether or not all good people will be saved</li> <li>• whether or not theological pluralism undermines central Christian beliefs</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• whether or not inter-faith dialogue has contributed practically towards social cohesion</li> <li>• whether or not Christian communities should seek to convert people from other faiths</li> <li>• whether or not scriptural reasoning relativises religious beliefs</li> <li>• whether or not Christians should have a mission to those of no faith</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• whether or not official Christian teaching should resist current secular views of gender</li> <li>• whether or not secular views of gender equality have undermined Christian gender roles</li> <li>• whether or not motherhood is liberating or restricting</li> <li>• whether or not the idea of family is entirely culturally determined</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a comparison of Ruether's and Daly's feminist theologies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sexism and patriarchy in Christianity, as it has developed in the mainstream Churches</li> <li>• whether Christianity can be changed or should be abandoned</li> </ul> </li> <li>• whether or not Christianity is essentially sexist</li> <li>• whether or not a male saviour can save women</li> <li>• whether or not only women can develop a genuine spirituality</li> <li>• whether or not the Christian God can be presented in female terms</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• whether or not spiritual values are just human values</li> <li>• whether or not there is evidence that Christianity is a major cause of personal and social problems</li> <li>• whether secularism and secularisation are opportunities for Christianity to develop new ways of thinking and acting</li> </ul>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• whether Christianity is, or should be, a significant contributor to society's culture and values</li></ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• whether or not Christian theology should engage with atheist secular ideologies</li><li>• whether or not Christianity tackles social issues more effectively than Marxism</li><li>• whether or not liberation theology has engaged with Marxism fully enough</li><li>• whether or not it is right for Christians to prioritise one group over another</li></ul>	