

What does Jerusalem have to do with Athens? A look at Christian philosophy

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 23 February 2006

Preacher: Stefan Lindholm

[0 : 00] It's still running, so here's what we're talking about. Seven minutes since you left! Where you are now, astronomer!! Out in the galaxy!

Okay! Anthony, was that his name? Is that your name?

He shortened the title, he said, to something else. But the first title was, What Does Jerusalem Have to Do with Athens?

And the subtitle, A Look at Christian Philosophy. So I'll just read this paper to you. That's all I'm going to do, and then we'll talk.

What does Jerusalem have to do with Athens? In the third century, the church father, Tertullian, asked this famous question. The question coming out of the relation between an expanding Christianity and the Greco-Roman culture is still today just as important as it was then.

[1 : 02] What does the Academy of Plato and all the schools of philosophy that flowed out of it have to do with Jerusalem, the religious origin, as it were, of Jewish and Christian faith?

Through the history of the church, there have been three main positions in relation to Tertullian's question. I hope you can follow on the handout here. The first one is arguing for separation, saying Athens and Jerusalem are worlds apart.

Meaning, reason and faith really. That's what we're talking about. On this side, arguing for separation, we have, besides Tertullian himself, people like Bernard of Clairvaux and Thomas of Akempis, and other great mystics.

But we also have many revivalists, charismatics, and contemporary evangelicals here as well. The second position, a sort of mid position, is arguing for harmony. In this camp, we have the early church father, Justin the Martyr, Augustine, Aquinas, and the mainline reformers like Luther and Calvin, and more or less the whole Roman Catholic tradition.

To the right of this position, we have the ones who want to assimilate philosophy with theology, reason and faith. Maybe to such a degree that reason outdo faith, and it's more important than faith.

[2 : 22] Among these, we have mainly rationalists like Descartes, Locke, Hegel, Leibniz, though some understand the whole Roman Catholicism and the medieval tradition with Aquinas as...

There we have one more. Wonderful. I'll wait for that. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Can I ask a question? It'll come back to you. There we have one more. Hi there. Sorry. I was just looking at my last day in the end of my...

Join in otherwise if you have time. Can I sit down and listen to the... Sorry, I forgot. I'm sorry to be right. I did a while I haven't left. Okay. Good luck trying it.

Someone more coming? Sorry. Sorry. Okay. We'll go on. They hear this on the internet maybe.

Well, so we have three positions.

[3 : 31] That's really what I'm saying. We have separation, harmony, and the ones who want to assimilate philosophy and theology of faith and reason. So these are the three main positions we have.

But having mapped out these historical camps, we have not really come very far. And I'm pleased to tell you that you have not come here for a history lesson. What I want to do is to explore the possibility of a Christian philosophy in trying to answer Tertullian's question.

That is basically, as I take it, either a Christian philosophy is either the idea of a Christian doing philosophy or a Christian philosophy per se.

Moreover, I would like to extend this exploration not only to the discipline of philosophy or alternative to theology, but to all scholarship and hard thinking, no matter the subject inside or

outside academia.

So to frame my question in the broadest possible fashion, it would be something like, what does it mean to be a thought through Christian? Or in relationship to university students, what does it mean to be a Christian student of biochemistry, literature, economics, philosophy, or history, or whatever? [4 : 42] So this is my scope, really. But my primary example would nevertheless, for most part, be philosophy. So forgive me for that. Hopefully, this is not arbitrary though, an arbitrary starting point, since philosophy in a certain sense always had a more independent role to other areas of thought and practice, like a bird's eye view on reality.

Not God's eye view, but a bird's eye view. And what is more important, and something I hope will be evident soon, is that all thinking and practice in life have something with philosophy to do in one or another way.

So, but to answer, to get more to the point, what is really the question here? What is the question? One, if one wants to think about a Christian philosophy, the first question coming to one's mind might be, what does, what can philosophy do for Christianity?

What help is philosophy for Christianity? But I'm actually more interested in the reverse of this question. What can Christianity do for philosophy? It was the question that, for instance, Aquinas, who argued for harmony between Jerusalem and Athens, asked at the outset of his famous *Summa Theologica*.

He did not ask whether philosophy was an okay or pure discipline. It was simply his starting point. It has also been so for many Christians since the early church.

[6 : 09] And today, we have many of the greatest philosophers, being Christians, or at any rate religious, or open to the religious. To name a few, William Alston, Alvin Plantinga, John Haldane, and the rock and roll couple of Christian philosophy, Robert and Marilyn McCord.

We have Thomas Flint, Peter van Inwagen, Eleanor Stump, Richard Swinburne, and many more. Many more. The strongly anti-religious climate of professional philosophy that dominated Europe just 50 years ago has now changed in a very interesting way.

Why is this so? Well, it is not my primary intent to give an explanation for this development, though I thought it is appropriate to point it out here at the outset. Rather, my primary intent is to give voice to this development.

This revival in philosophy reaches across denominational markers, all sharing in the common idea that Christianity actually can and should inform the way we do philosophy, as well as everything else in life.

To even start to talk about a genuine Christian philosophy or Christian scholarship or thinking of any kind, we therefore need to first realize that Christianity, as such, does not just pertain to a certain spiritual, private, or privileged sphere in another reality.

[7 : 33] The starting point needs to be this. If Christianity is true, it is true for all of reality shared by all human beings. The categories, for instance, of time and space, the material universe, should not need to be rejected as a part of a common reality.

Rather, they should be affirmed since the physical resurrection of Jesus Christ in time and space is a central part of classical Christianity. But a Christian philosophy, whatever that will come down to, should neither naively be equated with the Christian life as such.

One should neither draw the conclusion that all Christians are Christian philosophers. In fact, many people, as I said in the beginning, would find such a title an offense to faith.

That is not the point here. The embarrassing trivial point is that Christian philosophy is something in its own right, as a sphere of human life without occupying all of life.

Christian life is something more. It is someone holding the basic truths of classic Christianity true and putting one's trust in them as if they were about him or her.

[8 : 49] This can be done without one becoming a professional thinker or philosopher. Christian philosophy is namely secondary in nature.

It builds on the foundation on Christian beliefs. After all, this is also trivial. Most philosophical endeavors are basically founded on pre-philosophical convictions.

For instance, relativism or someone being a relativist is often this because he had that opinion before he started to philosophy. What philosophy can do is to argue with and from this position.

But surely, and less trivial maybe, there are at the same time some beliefs that arise from philosophical reflection. I, for instance, personally believe that the world consists of substances that

have a certain nature that can take on both necessary and accidental attributes.

Despite the technical language, this is a view I have come to form and hold onto from my philosophical studies. Just as some of you might be a defender of string theory from studying physics or generative grammar from studying linguistics.

[10:00] I don't know what would be the equivalent for you guys. I have a question. Yeah. Maybe you're talking about accidents. Is that like the word Catholic?

Like bread and wine. They use the same kind of language. But how, is that like Aristotle? What's that? Is that like Aristotle? A liar.

Aristotle, yeah. Yeah, it's sort of... Sort of, how would you mean like... I know what you mean by accidents, but how would you mean by accident in the universe? Well, it is a property something has that it doesn't have that all the time.

It is really talking about change. So by example, you mean like there's no kind of persistent transcendent kind of thing.

Yeah. Accident and... Well, yeah, I believe the soul have some accidental attributes in some way, but I say this share here was once not a share, it was a piece of wood.

[11:09] But now it has just... it's very simple. Now I've come to take on the other properties and have the form of a share. It's very basic. It is trivial in one sense.

And, as I said, the technical language could put you off and I will talk more about that. But that is really what I mean. It's nothing complicated in one sense. Normally, at least, these beliefs that we take on from philosophy, we do not have to find absolute conflict with the Christian foundation.

These are beliefs rising out of specialization, becoming a specialist within a certain field of knowledge. So wherein does the conflict lie, if there is any?

This question leads us to the next point of consideration when defending and defining the concept of Christian philosophy. And here we come to point three, the formal and material side of philosophy.

So let's start with the formal side. Though we are all familiar with the word philosophy and have some sort of grasp of its content and attach different connotations to it, that is, that it carries certain personal and emotional content from our history with and experience with this word.

[12:26] Irrespective of the positive and negative connotation you might attach to philosophy, I would like to suggest that it is helpful to view philosophy from two basic perspectives.

The first being philosophy as a method of thinking. This involves thinking logically, rationally, basically.

And this formal side of philosophy can be divided then into logic and rhetorics. Logic dealing with the basic forms of thoughts, really.

How we think. And it is not something extra outside of normal human life. And rhetorics, the way we speak and defend and articulate our ideas. So these two things being the sort of toolbox of philosophy for analyzing the world and engage with it.

For instance, the basic rule, logical rule, if A, then B. A, therefore B. I won't do a logic class with you.

[13:29] But this is one of the basic thought patterns we have. And we learned really from a very early age. I think it is a natural and inherent way of thinking for us.

An even more basic logical idea is the idea of bivalence or the excluded middle. It is the intuitive and very basic idea that every proposition can be either true or false.

And there is nothing like a third or in between truth value. But talking about formalities like this, like logic and arguments, is normally very trivial and not too exciting.

Unless if you are of a certain mentality. Still many people have benefited from a short excursus in argumentation theory so that they can spot good and bad arguments in newspapers and media.

When philosophical formalities get exciting for most of us, it is when we can see the obvious inconsistencies between the same politicians or perhaps teachers in this university's statements based on invalid rules for drawing conclusion.

[14:36] Or their use of undawful arguments in debates. Unfortunately, is not logic classes a prerequisite for being a public person. But why this excurses in the territory of basic logic and argumentation?

Because it is illustrating the universality and practical use of the formal side of philosophy. The formal side does not normally rise out of philosophical thinking.

Rather, it is presupposed by the philosopher that there is such a thing as reason, logic and things. And we normally use them. What philosophy does is to take these basic intuitions and think harder about them.

But there are, of course, objections to this. And one common Christian objection to this is that the Bible does not use the language of a philosopher.

Have you heard that? It is one of the sort of intuitive objections to a Christian philosopher, at least. You are kind of having to appropriate the Bible and use it as logic as you might not.

[15:43] How important is your logic to it? About like, you are saying this, but either A or not A. It is like when you look at something like the Trinity, you can't really put in lots of books.

I will get to that. I will get to that. I will get to that. Bear with me. Here it all depends on what kind of philosophical language that is referred to, obviously. So take the book of Proverbs, for instance, in the Bible.

It could easily be a good candidate for a philosophical language of a kind, though not using logical language. If you see what I mean. It does not talk about logic. But if one means the analytical and systematic character of British philosophy so prevalent even today, the objection is undoubtedly true.

Nowhere in the Bible one can find the technical language of, say, with Wittgenstein or anything like that. If the objection is merely about the style of language or tone of voice or degree of abstraction, it is harder to justify.

Are only the kinds of linguistic styles and genres found in the Bible valid modes of talking or communicating? Even if there are many linguistic modes or literary forms in the Bible, we have poetry, we have prose, we have letters, treaties, chronologies, and we have arguments of even philosophical kind.

[17:11] Should the Christian, the true Christian, be confined to these in his or her expression? I think not. If we open that Pandora's box, we would only be able to talk in the way of the Bible.

So I think it is not about the way you talk, really, or the language you use, primarily. I'm going to read, I think you have the quote there by John Haldane.

Would someone like to read it? The first part and then I comment. It's no good to say that the problems of philosophy have become technical or that the subjects have left the layman's understanding far behind.

Philosophical reflection begins with questions that intelligent and speculatively minded people ask. And I would say all people ask them, especially children if you've seen a child, they ask these kinds of questions.

There's a profound mystery about the world and they have this sense of wonder. That's because, was it Plato who said about, you know, you have to have a child's eyes to see something as if you've never seen it before?

[18:15] I believe, oh yeah, he, I don't know if he said that, but it sounds very platonic in one sense. Yeah, definitely, it's in his spirit. And I think Haldane's next remark is important.

Would you like to read it, David? Okay. Okay. Okay. Okay. However, a protracted, specific or technical, the pursuit of answers may be come, it should still be possible to formulate the substance of answers in terms of really intelligible, to intelligent and speculative and ordinary people.

Ordinary people. Sorry, go on. Okay. Intelligent and ordinary people. Yeah, well, I think so. That's my comment. Sorry. Wait a second.

Yeah. So you were interested in people? Well, I'm just saying that what he's calling intelligent and speculative and ordinary people are all people. Okay. Everyone has questions. Okay.

I'm not in terms of any further questions. No, it's in the beat. Can I understand? Even by some of the movement of communication, is there even a sense of the equality of things?

[19:20] Communicate? Communicate? This sometimes happens when philosophers forget philosophy's intellectual roots in human beings common, pre-professional speculation.

Or worse, forget what prompted in acquiring the first place. Yeah. He says it's better than I can do. British good philosopher. So, the material side of philosophy instead.

The objection against the formal use of philosophy cannot stand, as I take it, in this sense. Are there other ways of construing an objection, if we want that, to Christian philosophy?

We have, at this point, I believe, taken enough time in the excursions of the formal side of philosophy. So, let's therefore turn to the philosopher's material side, dealing with philosophical

content.

Because I think the more substantial objection is found here. This is namely, primarily a question concerning philosophical content, as well as the personal motivation for anyone supporting a certain philosophical idea or content.

[20 : 28] This domain of philosophy could also be divided up, I think, helpfully in the classical parts, as you have here, metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics.

So, let's just go through those so we know what we're talking about. Metaphysics, or ontology, deals with reality. What we have right here, and what we have beyond it. What we can see and what we not can see.

Reality, by and large. And it also deals with questions like, are we free, or are we determined? Is there a God? What is time? And all of these things. That's metaphysics, the big questions.

Then we have epistemology. How do we get to know this reality? What are the sources for this knowledge and all that? What is knowledge, really? And we have ethics or morals. I think you are more familiar with that concept, normally.

What is right and wrong? What is the true good? How should we live? Politics, together in society or in groups. Often, these three things come together at the same time within a certain view.

[21 : 29] And as, yeah, a world view is asking, is answering all these questions. This is also often what we call a philosophy, a school of thought, or a world view.

It is more or less a complete package answering the basic questions of metaphysics. What is reality? Epistemology. How can we know it? And ethics, how should we live?

Answering these questions and other related important questions in one or another way on different levels of sophistication is engaging in philosophy and expressing a world view.

Most of us are selective and do not follow a complete system or complete package. In our postmodern society, the reaction against complete system has given a new situation where we are rather supposed to pick and choose and not look for a consistent world view.

Let me illustrate what I am talking about here. Say you claim to be a Christian and at the same time hold to the basic aspects of Hegelianism.

[22 : 38] Anyone heard of Hegel before? I will tell you. Hegel was a German philosopher living in the 1800s. Is he a pantheist?

Yeah. Sort of a pantheist, yeah. I am a pantheist. Yeah. You just heard the name at least. So he is not completely unfamiliar. Why are you a synthesis species?

Exactly. I know what I am. That's right. So Hegelianism says that the world and God are ultimately one and that the world is evolving from lower to higher state on all levels, primarily ethically.

The common idea of something being either true or not is actually, let's see here, true or not.

That is the excluded middle, as I referred to, is replaced with an included middle. Truth is actually a synthesis between theses and antithesis, as you mentioned, David.

[23 : 39] This means that Hegelianism is a certain brand of philosophy, a certain school with a name, content, that provides answers for the basic philosophical questions of life.

This is a worldview implying impersonal evolution and monism, that is, everything is one. Not very unlike the methodology and presupposition of contemporary natural science.

It actually were some very similar presuppositions. Christian theism, on the contrary, is classically taken to be including personal creation by three personal gods, distinct from the world, the opposite of impersonal evolution and monism.

Moreover, Christianity seems to affirm that there are things that are either true or false, and that the world rather is declining than evolving, but that the Creator has set out to redeem his creation.

So it's a completely different story, completely different worldview. So here we need to ask Tertullian's question again, in an updated form. What does Jerusalem have to do with Berlin, i.e., the town where Hegel did most of his work?

[24 : 50] There seems namely to be a fundamental conflict between the thought of Hegel and that of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, or Jesus and Paul. So many Christians have taken on a more or less explicit Hegelian coat and tried to wear it at the same time they pretended to be Christians.

And if you want to have an interesting study in whatever topic you're doing, study the influence of Hegel and thought in our day. You don't have to read all of Hegel because it's almost in-intelligible sometimes.

But it's a really interesting journey how to understand our own culture, where the roots are and all that. So you think about the law of Christians? It sneaked in. How do you mean? Well, the whole idea that truth is in the middle is a very prevalent... And we're talking about ultimate realities here.

We're not talking about if we can know it or not. Can you have a consistent period of conflict with that kind of thing? I don't think so.

[25 : 56] But look at our society and look at how people think and look at the similarities. It's an interesting and fascinating study. Postmodern theory is not essentially but is definitely Hegelian, I would say.

Basically, the same battle the early Christians had to fight in the Gnostic philosophies of its day. I'll explain that now. The same conflicting ideas were meeting.

Impersonal versus personal. Emanation versus creation. That is the idea of an outflow without any idea or intent behind it. What's that? Emanation is like the time behind it.

Is that like God's stare and he doesn't realize. It's kind of creating everything. It is just flowing out of it. It's not an intentional act. It is just happening. Like determinism. Is it tied to that kind of time well with the pantheism as well?

Yeah. Yeah. It ties together with the pantheism. So you think like Christianity sort? Hi there. Good to have you here. Things sort like off on one end.

[27 : 11] Yeah. I don't know. You don't see like the actual view of the world. But apart from the monarchy. You can all kind of... Yeah.

Yeah. So I'm just saying. Yeah. That's what I'm saying. That's right. Hi there. What's your name? Eugene. Eugene. We're talking about Christian philosophy.

Please, reply. And whatever that is. Can we recap simply? Simply? Do that for me. Please. There is an outline.

We've been saying. There are basic three ways of looking at philosophy. You can either separate philosophy and theology. I mean theology and philosophy.

Or you can have them harmonizing. Or you can have them sort of becoming one and one eating up the other. That's what we've been talking about. Okay. And we've been saying that Christianity actually has something to do with philosophy.

[28 : 13] And philosophy... We are rather looking from the perspective what can Christianity do for philosophy. And we've been talking about where the conflict maybe can lie within such a thing as a Christian philosophy.

So I'm really trying to articulate what a Christian philosophy is. And I said it is not the same thing as being a Christian. A Christian philosophy doesn't have to be every Christian. Okay.

But it is... Since Christianity is true for all of life, you can also do this. You can be a Christian in your philosophy studies. Or just thinking. So I'm just not talking about philosophy.

I'm talking about philosophy and example of life. Okay. Is that where we are? Sort of. And we've been talking about Hegelianism. We just came into the hard part of it. Okay. What have we been saying here? We've been saying that... I gave that as an example of someone trying to be Christian and sort of pantheist.

Do you know what pantheist is? Yes. At the same time and what conflict that might imply. They were arguing impersonal versus impersonal creation and truth versus relativism and so on. These pantheists are not really determined. Basically some of those experiences are not really determined.

[29 : 16] Basically some of those experiences are not really determined. Basically some of those experiences are not really determined. Basically some of those experiences are not really determined. Basically some of those experiences are not really determined. Basically some of those experiences are not really determined. Basically some of those experiences are not really determined. Basically some of those experiences are not really determined. Basically some of those experiences are not really determined. Basically some of those experiences are not really determined. Basically some of those experiences are not really determined.

I also said that that was the problem the first Christians had. They were arguing impersonal versus impersonal creation, truth versus relativism, and so on.

And that's where we are. These pantheistic, esoteric religions of the first century threatened to thwart Christian religion into subdivision of itself.

Out of its controversy, the first apologists emerged, and the Christians had to start to think philosophically. That is about the philosophical content, what philosophy is.

The problem I try to illustrate here is not so much the problem of a certain formal method, though they sometimes coincide, as we've seen. Still, the real differences are much more clear on the material side.

[30 : 17] We've been dividing material and formal side of philosophy. Material dealing with logic, and material, sorry, formal dealing with logic, and the sort of basic sort patterns that we follow.

And material that is answering the basic questions of life. So I hope you can understand what I'm talking about when joining in here. So, let's revisit Christian philosophy for real men.

Have we not this far already then indicated the material side, or the content side of our Christian philosophy as Christian and full stop? Yes, but without answering the initial question, which is, what does Jerusalem have to do with Athens?

I would namely say that there are things that are not directly from Jerusalem, that are relevant in an interesting way, and actually materially compatible with Christian faith.

Being a Christian, should I read this to you? Yes, I should read this to you. Being a Christian, I believe this is ultimately so, because all truths are God's truths. I think, for instance, it is no surprise that Plato or Aristotle have come to good use by Christian thinkers like Augustine and Aquinas.

[31 : 36] Augustine's mind, before his conversion to Christianity, was entrapped in a framework like that of Hegel or the Gnostic sect. It meant for him that he could not think of God as distinct from creation.

He could not think of God being outside of time and space, and being active in time and space, as Christian theism is claiming. Looking back on his life, Augustine wrote in his Confessions concerning this.

He said, I had read the books of the Platonists, and had been set by them towards the search for a truth that is incorporeal. I think it was your will, he is talking to God here, that I should come upon these books before I had made study of the Scriptures, that it might be impressed on my memory, how they had affected me.

It seems that Augustine is here implicitly arguing for some basic elements of classic Platonic thought and Christian theism that overlaps. For him, this overlapping became the bridge to Christianity.

Let me take another example, as we've already talked about. Aristotle's metaphysics. It's one of my favorites, sorry. Despite its possible connotations, or lack thereof, it is a piece of common sense thinking only on a deeper level about reality.

[32 : 58] He claims that there are things in the world with a certain regularity in nature, and that these can have properties in different combinations. A piece of wood can change the properties of being a tree to being a table, but still remain the same essential wood, still have the nature of wood.

So basically, Aristotle, thinking about the world, is that there is a world that exists inhabited by substances and changing properties.

Quite simple, really. It's really how we view the world. We just don't talk very much about it. These things are hard to make materially incompatible with Christianity, especially since the Aristotelian terms, since the Aristotelian terms, substance and nature, are used by the early church fathers in the creed, describing God's character in order to defend biblical faith.

As a matter of fact, it is not more controversial than what you and I are doing today, using a vast array of psychological words and vocabulary, be it Freudian or not, and applies to Christian experience.

Who would not accept that the Christian conception of sin has dimensions that are helpfully expressed in psychological terms of suppression, loss of identity, and shame?

[34 : 24] I don't have any problem with that, and most Christians don't, because psychology seems to be a part of our reality. That fact, on the other hand, does not necessarily have to imply that Christianity is psychologically totally or totally explainable in such terms.

And I also seen today, working in Labrie with people, psychologically, plausibility is one of the highest criteria as we have on something.

If it is not sort of working mentally or in my soul or with my emotions, it is not something I want to have to do with. So if Christianity is true, it has to be true psychologically as well, and we just take that for granted.

And it seems to be one of the most important criteria people have on Christianity today. Of course, there are some fundamental conflicts at play here as well, but as a Christian, and at least not as a Christian philosopher, student, or scholar, one can afford, hi there, again, afford to be selective the way Augustine was.

I do not have to buy into all of Freud's theories that religion is essentially suppressed sexuality just because I might have good use of his vocabulary and analysis.

[35 : 39] So, to complete my analogy, I can use, for instance, Aristotle's term of nature about God without accepting his whole program. There we go.

So, this is the last point I'm going to make now. I'm going to use Augustine even more. Towards a Christian philosophy. Thus far, I have covered the basics.

If one should look for role models of Christians engaging with culture and thought, we could look at many great thinkers through the ages. Augustine, arguing from the providence of God, saying that all things, all good things, be it silver or gold, philosophy or learning, are God-given things that should come under the leadership of Christ and given to us.

Let's hear him again. If those who are called philosophers, especially the Platonists, have said what is true and in harmony with our faith, we are not only to shrink from it, but we are not only not to shrink from it, but to claim it for our own use from those who have unlawful possession of it.

I would like to continue in a similar spirit as that of Augustine. My choice of Augustine is very straightforward. He is the most influential, used and commented post-biblical writer.

[37 : 08] The whole medieval and reformation spirituality and theology and culture are deeply shaped by Augustinian thought. Besides that, Jesus and Paul were not philosophers as Augustine was.

There are simply few persons that could serve as a similar model. One central aspect of Augustine's thought is the centrality of faith. All investigation starts with faith and return to faith. But this is not to be done blindfoldedly. He says that arguments have a great role to play in the communication of faith. This does not imply infallibility on part of the believer in the sense that he cannot go wrong in thinking from faith.

Errors should be admitted and doubt should be taken serious is what Augustine is saying. From this basis as a Christian thinker, Augustine could therefore claim autonomy.

He was not ultimately dependent on non-Christian sources. Though when they are good, they are God-given things to be embraced. Instead, under this autonomy of a Christian, all things can fall into a greater framework of God's gracious act towards us in Christ's person and work, to which our lives are to be responses.

[38 : 31] Christ did not say to love him, Christ did say to love, tell us to love him with all our being, heart, mind, and will. Human history and activity has meaning and a center in the creation, fall, redemption, and restoration.

In the world, the Christian therefore has an important role, though not the main part. He has been given the command to cultivate the earth that God has created because it was good.

From this status, the Christian or any other man is not at the center of the world. God is at the center of the world. Man is but a steward. History is a struggle between two opposing forces played out in history, between faith and unfaith, between the city of God and the city of the world, as Augustine says.

The world drama is about the creation as a whole and particularly about the human soul. The intellectual struggles between humanism and Christianity is one of the subplots of this drama.

Alvin Planting, as we already mentioned, I'm happy to hear, one of the leading Christian philosophers, has taken Augustine's insights further, saying that in the modern world, there are two forces in the city of the world, in the *kivitas mundi*, as Augustine says, that are fighting against the good creation of God and human soul.

[39 : 57] They are namely naturalism and relativism in their many forms and phases. And these are not just merely academic ideas, but ideas permeating ordinary people of our time.

It does not take much thinking to realize the amount of naturalism behind our consumerist culture, or the role relativism plays in an internet based reality.

But it is hard to understand one's own times. Still, this is Augustine's challenge to the Christian philosopher. Where are we? How did we get here?

And where are we going? What are the common answers to the most important questions, in life? Big questions, of course, but important ones. At the same time, Christians, people, Christians or not, stop asking them.

Life shrinks and becomes compartmentalized and eventually leads to chaos and death. Thinkers, humanists, philosophers might not be useful in society because they don't produce very much, but they are necessary, as my old Latin professor said.

[41 : 06] How many of the big changes in the world have not started in the realm of ideas? But how to understand our times? Well, one thing is clear, having a firm grip of one's own worldview and then comparing it with others is the first place to look.

As with most common education, it is not something that we are trained to do in schools. We are not trained to be conscious about worldviews. As a matter of fact, postmodernity denies the fact that there is such a thing as worldviews in the sense of a grand story, a plot, the meaning of life, that makes sense of it all, because the grand stories that have previously been suggested, i.e.

Christianity, Marxism, capitalism, and all of that, have been abused, and therefore we should throw it all out, they say. Here, the Christian should rise to his full length and give healthy criticism.

As a Christian, one is not allowed to twathe anything with Christianity, because one is not in position to do so, since one is merely a creature and not at the center of creation.

Surely, postmodernity is right in that sense. Christianity has been used as a tool for oppression, but surely that is not a conclusive argument against its truth and validity.

[42 : 27] This critique has been answered by the Christian philosopher, as I would call him, Francis Schaeffer, also the founder of the Christian community where I happen to live and work.

He tried to the best of his abilities to trace the roots of despair and loss of reality. He saw people experience after the Second World War. In a very Augustinian way, he tried to single out the sources and explain them and their function in human history.

In that way, he became one of the first, at least, evangelical Christians to speak with an autonomous voice in our age. He knew he was not God. Neither he nor Hitler nor any other man could claim the title.

He told a sad story of how the Christian church had gradually adopted an anti-Christian way of thinking, calling it Christian, but only so by name and not in substance.

Even if he did not get all the details right, maybe in history, he started something that inspired very many others, trying to understand the times from a Christian worldview and see what difference is make.

[43 : 36] A Christian philosopher's job description is partly therefore to unmask what is going on. So, what can the full arsenal of classical Christians do for philosophy, as we asked before?

To borrow from planting again, a Christian philosopher or scholar or thinker or human being would need to have his own agenda, and that Christian agenda, that in different ways would affect his way of thinking and behaving.

This is not merely, this is not meant in any coerced way, like brainwashing or self-delusion, rather it is promoting intellectual honesty, not separating secular and sacred.

Today, it is, it takes intellectual, moral, and courage to do so, at least in Europe, where the climate is hostile to classical Christian thought.

It does not, I would say, take the same and perhaps any kind of personal courage today to be an existentialist, which is quite ironic, if you know the roots of it. It does not take any personal courage to be a naturalist or relativist inside or outside of academia.

[44 : 48] These are simply the established ways and normal attitudes we have in society and academia. If you are a naturalist at home, you can be so at work or in school as well.

Few would make life hard for you. Now, many Christians in academia live under the pressures of these attitudes. They are forced to be Christians at home, but naturalists at work, if they are biologists, for instance.

Philosophy is not formed in the social and psychological vacuum. I'm soon finished. We have understood, after Thomas Kunt's groundbreaking explorations of how natural science developed, that it is very much a social and organic development.

A researcher, student, or a common reader of their books are in a social context of common sense understandings, values, ideas, economics, and different worldviews competing at the same time. In the spirit of Marx, for instance, we could therefore ask, who is paying your salary at university? And discover the web of power structures and influences guiding higher education today.

[46 : 01] Being a Christian philosopher should therefore not naively be equated with only books and ideas outside of a social realm. Christian is the main social identity marker in Christian philosophy, philosophy, and not philosophy.

Philosophy is merely the social pond where he or she happens to swim. One important aspect, or duty even, of a Christian philosopher or of the Christian philosopher is accordingly to investigate and argue with the presuppositions of itself and all other branches of thinking in culture at large. This includes everything from spotting inconsistencies in public politics to criticizing art, thinking about morals, and much more. Philosophy per se has therefore a very interesting position in relation to everything else because it is not pressured to produce anything really in the same way. Therefore, philosophy, and especially Christian philosophy with its autonomous voice, can therefore still retain the free status of criticizing all other disciplines and areas of life since all have something of a philosophy at its foundation.

Thank you for bearing with me. You've done very well. You have my form to state. Sorry for taking so long, but I appreciate your questions during my reading of it.

[47 : 32] I didn't know what to expect, so I just read it out loud. I hope you got it anyway. Could you tell us about this right? I've heard of him, but I don't even know as a Christian.

I don't know much about him, so you mentioned them. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Sure, yes, I would be honored to do so. He started the Christian community and started a center called Labrie, which I'm living in and working up in Gretemau outside of Petersfield.

He started that really in Switzerland 50 years ago, and he did that after the Second World War, where people were very disillusioned, not knowing where to go.

Existentialism was in vogue, and a lot of hippie culture. So, by divine providence, I guess, people started to come into their house, having basic Bible studies and asking philosophical questions at the same time.

And from there on it went. And today there are, I think, about five or ten Labries around the world where people come, live, and study.

[48 : 49] And get me right, Labrie and Francis Schaeffer and all of that, it's not all about ideas. Definitely not. It is, at the most, 50%. I hope less. Because it is talking about all of reality.

It is talking about Christ's leadership and lordship over all our life. meaning that whatever you're doing, you could do it as a Christian, unless it's not sinful.

But this is not the way we've been taught in church. So, there is this conflict. And today we have many people coming with bad church experiences, coming to us and sort of giving Christianity as a last chance, sort of.

and one of the wonderful things we see is that Christianity is played out in relationship between people. Because half day we study and half day we do something practical.

Because the place is run like that, all the libraries. So, you might be gardening, you might be washing up, you might be cooking, or something else. And you see people with different backgrounds and you talk and you discuss and you meet a new faith, maybe from the other side of the world.

[50 : 01] And that is the rest. Hospitality is a big thing in La Rie. And, yeah, La Rie just started without any, now we're going to start La Rie, just people started to come there and then suddenly they saw that, okay, this is something going, here's something going, let's do it.

And Francis Schaeffer started to put out his books, or his talks really, because he didn't want to record as we're doing right now. So then he just printed out whatever his talks was and he produced about 20 books.

The most famous one maybe is The God Who's There, or Escape from Reason. Dealing with what, at more depth, what I've been saying here about the roots of despair and loss of reality and the questions of our time and post-modern.

He was one of the very first Christians really who addressed the problem of post-modernity. He was one of the first who knew the word even and knew what it meant.

So that made him unique. And yeah, it just flowed out of that. I think he influenced, among the philosophers I mentioned in the beginning, I think he influenced half of them to do what they do in one way or another.

[51 : 22] He was not a professional philosopher. He was a theologian and an imposter. Pure evangelist in one sense. But he had a great heart for people and culture. And it's not all about philosophy.

It's art. Art is a big thing. If you play music, yes, amen, all of that. That's him.

I think personally his best book is called True Spirituality. It is not a philosophical book. It is a book about Christian life. I like that list.

What are the other books about philosophy? They're about the history of ideas and how Christianity has declined. The first you mentioned tomorrow, the trilogy.

Yeah, and the third one is called, I forgot it, The Church at the end of the 20th century might be, no, it's not. He's there and he's not silent, I think the third one is called.

[52 : 29] But I mean, if you read The God Who's There, you get his program, and he's dealing with a lot of, he covers a lot of around there, he's dealing with all of life, really, all areas, art, morals, and so on.

So that's Francis. And we try to live and do the same thing in one sense, but there are new challenges today, definitely.

People are more introspective. People tend not to have the kinds of questions, not have questions at all when they come. Actually, there's a sort of apathy among people today, more and more. people come to the British.

Yeah, this is the interesting thing. People came in the 60s, smoking pot, sitting in the window, sort of, and just throwing out, I don't believe that, you know, that's the attitude, or that's the scenario, I've been told.

But today, people come, and they usually come from Christian, very conservative, legalistic, sort of very dark, enclosed places, and they come to us and sort of are totally destroyed.

[53 : 37] Psychologically, sometimes, and just from their church experience. So what we do is try to bring out the questions of life, and hopefully they come to life with God's help.

So sometimes people come and spend a whole term just looking for the question. What is my question? What's that? Well, the question might be more revealing than the answer to these people, actually, because they've been told what Christianity is all their life, but they don't know why.

This is one typical Lubbry student, and then you have the classical, the one who always asks. You would be an excellent Lubbry student.

go, Dave. Can I ask a question? Yeah. What kind of books would you recommend?

Well, the ones apart from those? Yeah. You mean, in terms of Christians?

[54 : 41] just for anyone who might not complete background? Yeah. You know, just to give it to them. Yeah.

Well, the ones you already mentioned, Moreland and Craig and Plantinga, they are sort of the leading Christian philosophers. And you have a few others, but they especially, not Plantinga so much, but Craig and Moreland really do a good job and try to, make Christianity public and for lay people.

Yeah. Yeah. I think they're doing a good job. But you have, if you want to have someone who deals more depth with post-modernity and engage more with that, you would have Merrill Westfall.

Merrill Westfall, he's very good. Westfall, W-E-S-T-P-H-A-L.

Merrill, M, M, M, M Westfall. So you think guys like Plantinga and Richard is fine, they're kind of more academic?

[56 : 13] Yeah, well, they're not trying that hard to make it accessible. Plantinga has tried a couple of times and Swinburne, no, not really. Yeah, he did a couple of books.

Well, yeah, I mean, I've read their stuff and I like it, but it's not really boiled down to undergraduate or undergraduate.

But like he's got that whole warranty of Christian thing. I don't know, I reckon Christians should get that hang of it. It's quite a nice spirit.

Their life seems to be. A lot of Christians don't understand it. Craig did a good job in a book called Five Views on Apologetics.

There are these books, Five Views and Four Views of. And he argues from Planting Us warranted series about that Christians really should take more advantage of Planting Us work because it's groundbreaking.

[57 : 17] And he uses it in his classical apologetics. So he explains it very easy there, I think. I saw like that Richard Dawkins story on Channel 4.

Yeah? And he saw it going around. I heard about that. Yeah, he was sort of going around giving the original legal thing. Yeah, but he was giving him the old what's the philosophy theory that positive is you know that way you can't say anything about metaphysics Holocaust.

Yeah, positive Basically. Basically, if he loves you I was thinking man that's well out of Dayton but like no one is watching that he's questioning the Christians pretty much former because they're pretty much like former the network or whatever they're not going to question anything he's saying because he's intelligent and they're like fundamentally this is the thing he's asking them ways of faith how to improve and it's like if they knew planting God would he say they'd be able to do you know what I mean and that's the full manner to start hearing and take on someone like that as opposed to someone who can't defend their faith because they don't know how to do it to you do you know what I mean yeah well the problem with Dembski is that he's not a thought through scientist yeah or Dawkins sorry yeah Dawkins no no he seems to be a lot pretty he's not thought through he just kind of thinks of life and material and if he hasn't got but like if he actually read philosophy he might understand the light he should have a class in logic or something

I think if there's any help I mean people I spoke to who watch the program people who are not Christians have kind of recognized that the program was blatantly very biased so it was disappointing they said to see this professor who they've heard the name of you know this famous guy who's supposed to be intellectual presented program that was so blatantly biased in one direction yeah rather than giving at least he wasn't even at least trying to do an impartial kind of account he's just going and saying I think this this is all rubbish look I've proved it yeah it's just the people it's just people interviewed it's like he's just blatantly picked them out to give like religion a back name and I think he did a good job he's interviewing a Muslim fundamentalist he said his life's going to take over the world you know nothing you can do about it and then so he's interviewing some Christian in the deep south whatever he was like saying you know people who do abortion went to hell you know it makes it look really bad yeah yeah but I was just seeing that and I was really angry and I was thinking why did he take on a Christian with a brick and I was seeing half of my guess yeah but yeah that's my point that's what I mean

I think just for Christians they need to develop a Christian mind because the Christian mind doesn't have to be afraid for that kind of what's that yeah that's a good book actually yeah yeah yeah I was just surprised that I had a program like that on channel 4 I used to quite like channel 4 channel 4 used to be 3 I think so I really had a special channel I was really surprised that we put it on a program like that that was so biased in one direction yeah I was told on BBC Horizon we didn't have a program that's similar but at least that was it does maintain the design and I stuck them on for like 10 minutes so they're like William Dempsky talking yeah and then like the rest of the show they gave Richard Dawkins on the floor and like it made it look like he basically said everything William Dempsky said before was like a little crap yeah and he's like I don't know but yeah wonderful hmm it wasn't like a debate you know what I mean it was just like hmm hmm but yeah so that's my frustration

[61 : 32] I feel like Christians are more clear hmm yeah but I will do it like we need Christian astrophysics who can answer this no I seriously I think we need someone who who steps out of their sort of academic comfort and can speak from that I think Christians don't really care either like they don't care that they're in my brains and like they don't care they just say oh I've got faith and they haven't you know what I mean and they're like you know yeah but if you want to talk to people I mean a lot of Christians say apologetics is no use and philosophy is no use because it's up to God to like it is you know it is but like there's no reason to say that you're old and have a say like someone's conversion to be able to say can you recommend anything by

Augustine to read I've not read any Augustine anymore what's that yeah I I don't think I I do recommend it I mean you have to read those sources a little bit selectively and historically informed they they can be read on their own merits but there are things that are sort of quite repulsive in them but I think his what would be a good book by the Confessions is my favorite book definitely of course I've seen it rather have you read it I read it three times and it's the book that I'm going to

read the rest of my life it's one of my favorite books I don't like everything in it of course but it gives you a good idea of what yeah what

Augustine says well what Augustine tried to say is that wherever you find something that is of use for the Christian church it is a God given gifts by providence he would say and that is not because it is something extra outside of Christianity that have a higher value because what he's saying that if Christianity is true is true for all of reality and therefore all of reality is God's reality and whatever you find out there that is not sort of talked about in the Bible it is something that you can have good use of and what's that Augustine said that yeah what's that yeah I mean and my case was that Schaefer was an Augustinian thinker because Augustine has shaped this as I would say this harmony between faith and reason where you can find harmony in contemporary thinkers or good thinkers through the ages you would have they would probably have read Augustine because I think there is no one who did better than him really I was kind of thinking more like say like the movement in the evangelical kind of theology today it's more like going back to the kind of Jewish background to the Bible centuries up until recently it's kind of been you think about people who write read just like certain theologians they're looking at the history and the theology like

Jews as opposed to kind of looking at the platonic or an aristotic and sort of every mindset rather yeah basically do you know what I mean yeah and try to have a conflict there between those yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah well I think they're making a bad not thought through argument if they're saying that there is a conflict of between those two of course there are conflicts in that but I mean it's not a complete conflict because what the Greeks were doing was doing something in an area of life a social thing they were doing philosophy they were thinking about life which became a school subject as a way of analyzing reality just as chemistry as of psychology or anything and they were sort of drawing up these ways of looking at reality and that would

[66 : 59] I mean we don't have any problem with doing that usually in other areas of life so why is the problem with philosophy is the other way yeah yeah yeah but I I I think the objection needs to be very much more articulate to say than just to say that well Greek and Hebrew are a complete collision course with each other no no but like the Hebrews were pretty anti Hellenistic but you know they were quite separated and then like you get simple well how yeah well I would say how is it and saying say in Greek what is Greek what is what is Greek yeah yeah yeah yeah

I don't know but yeah like just just little things you probably can't identify if you're not kind of well versed of you know it's like you said with the Hegadians because they're not versed in philosophy they don't recognize that you know this might be biblical interpretation yeah yeah in terms of biblical interpretation it's not always helpful knowing lots of Greek philosophy if that's what they're saying yes what's that Augustine yeah I mean he is I mean he is the main source for the reformers and I mean his his biblical commentary doesn't you don't find much philosophy in that he though often when he refers to philosophers he's saying that they're they're usually wrong because they don't have revelation they start from another starting point they don't start from faith and so I mean it's not like he he's trying to assimilate the two things as one of the positions went he's trying to find harmony where there is harmony so there are he's saying that some things are compatible with Christian faith I would think that some some some philosophical thinking would be helpful in our understanding the Bible sometimes for instance using I mean when we where if you're just reading the Bible and just reading biblical sources you wouldn't easily get to the idea of a trinity or at least you couldn't defend it against others you would need to step out of that it doesn't have to be orsotelian but it just happened to be the way people talked and found it compatible today we would probably have very much more psychological language we would talk perhaps about three selves in God instead of three persons in God but I think I just think that that is a way of trying to make it communicated to normal people or to people of our day because see the people who think they only can use the biblical language when they're talking about Christianity they don't come very far that's the thing about apologetics when we talk about interpretation of the bible you can't just I still feel like I could learn more about Trinity from studying say the Hebrews back to the righteous philosophy but like if I'm going to talk to someone on the street about it I would use more philosophical approach yeah yeah I wasn't really speaking about apologetics here but if you're interested in apologetics I think it doesn't work well on the streets yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah different languages of expressing yeah yeah yeah so although to understand the bible we need to kind of get to the mind of the maybe more even mind yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah that is yeah but there is a danger of you know taking a kind of greed mind and

then yeah just being in that mind when you read the bubble yeah exactly exactly exactly yeah but but yeah i don't think it's just a matter of language though that that that yeah world views content i i i i i i say greek it is a it is it is a big thing yeah i mean oh even bigger than greek yeah oh yeah i you know i don't know what that objection would mean really really but but but but but but i think it's better to to ask the question what can christianity do for philosophy that is the better question than to ask what can christianity do what can philosophy do for your christianity for your biblical interpretation or whatever if we ask that other question what christianity can do for philosophy we can then have a christian philosophy that might be informative of our interpreting the bible maybe but philosophy is a thing in and of itself it seems today just as psychology or just as astrophysics it is this area of study and how are you a christian in that that is a more interesting question than trying than trying to find all the problems of course you will hit problems here too but not the same kind of thing what's that why do you think there's been a kind of research in christian philosophy like in recent years there's a lot of well respected philosophers why there's been a post modernity yeah open it up well it

opened up because just up until the war second world war and after the second world war sort of the achieved either you were an existentialist or you were an analytic philosopher and there was not very much in between but then post-minority came to criticize both of these positions really maybe more with a favor towards existentialism and open up philosophy should be a plurality of schools ideas and competing with each other because it was really a static war that it wasn't really exciting and therefore you couldn't be a christian and a philosophy because first you had to be existentialist or analytical and maybe you could become a christian you could be a christian i could name very few christian philosophers from this time one of the few would be frederick coppulston famous yeah i mean he would be one of the few really christian minds of this time but c.s lewis would be another one g.k.

[75 : 56] cesset and others not professional philosophers definitely philosophers yeah i mean he understood what he understood was that your christianity is not just a privileged sphere it is about all of life and he did just that in a little way of trying to understand what epistemology had done to the modern mind the modern mind before planting i really had said that if you have knowledge you have to be able to prove it scientifically but he said something differently he like kind of the whole rationalist yeah yeah as a christian you're not entitled to do anything you're not bound to those canons of thinking really because it was conventions that were really strong so he opened it up among others but he was one of the first christians who really did it gone on doing it i must say that i think just for me personally i'm starting to come to essentially it more than that but i think post identity whatever it is movement or culture autism attitudes to life in the late 20th century it kind of it helped me a bit i think i started struggling with christianity about maybe five or six years ago wondering what is it that i know then i when i first wrote studies i built into modernism and it actually freed me i presume on grace a bit i took a year out where i just decided to in a way do or think whatever i wanted questioning everything i read even in the bible which i used to view a sacra and because now i learn like the niv translation how to make a few mistakes and regards to personal trinity gender issues and suddenly thought you know there's so many problems you know what do i believe in anymore what do i depend on so i took a year out where i believed in nothing but that jesus died for my sins anything else that was secondary about sex before marriage abortion i just treated them as really secondary issues i just tried to focus on one thing and that's it it actually helped me because it it just it questioned everything in the grand narrative so i questioned everything my friends told what christians and non-christians and it actually freed me up and i came back to christianity best i think after that one year i don't know why but most christians in my told that oh you know i actually quite like this when there's men and the culture that came with it you always get a really bad reaction like how can you be a christian and like that it actually helped me i don't know if you know anyone else who went through that but i think it helped me quite a bit i guess i did too something very similar post-modernity has been a blessing to the church in many ways i thought so yeah definitely no doubt when the christian union when they do evangelism training it's always seen as the devil yeah it's been given that name for right and wrong reasons yeah they once they once had this campaign where you there's this computer software where you put it in and you make people do a questionnaire

and find out what is their worldview yeah that's fine as far as people who don't really think very much but if you read all these questions it's very geared towards evangelical christianity you know

what do you believe do you believe so just for the fun of it i thought i'll do my own yeah so i kind of did a multiple choice and i you could tell straight away which are the standard christian answers that they want so i just did it the way i actually felt at that time yeah and i came out as a nihilist even though i still believed in jesus which i thought was quite funny the ideal answer is you would be a theist but i came out as a nihilist only because i answered one question differently i said do you believe in a specific morality at that point in time for me i believed in jesus i wasn't sure about whether morality is important right or wrong i believe in if you get right with god then everything starts to come into place as your bad habits go out of the window but i thought i just said no that made me a nihilist just because i asked that one differently that's scary i think i don't think this as a campus-wide crusade thing yeah well that's that's a modernist evangelical who writes people like that yeah yeah but that makes philosophy even more important and interesting i think yeah because it permeates everything christians even if they claim not to be they have taken a strong stance on philosophy yeah there is a philosophy but this is what i'm saying about christians need to get mature views of everything rather than just you know do the bible but i think and say that's yeah don't even try to understand yeah yeah yeah yeah um i did i did go to an apologetics training thing there's a rabbi zakhirai industry there's one in the uk i went for the student training just to see what it's like um i think thanks to michael rams who's the director he's he's quite into philosophy yeah there's a very strong philosophical slant for that which was helpful if not it wouldn't have been so helpful so i really benefit from just hearing michael rams yeah he's very good um yeah and i i didn't realize actually what he was doing was what you wrote here the uh law of excluded middle because the way he the way he rationalizes in his talks he always does this you know he always likes to start with his talks where people say that there is no truth but if you say that there is no truth you just make a truthful statement yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah i'm having lunch somewhere just about christians right um do you think the reason christians are afraid of different schools of thought is because they're afraid different schools of thought thought yeah yeah the reason they're afraid in a way is because they're afraid they're going to lose their faith and they don't want to tackle things yeah head on you know what i mean and they don't allow other things to feel children yeah and how do you go about dealing i mean i suppose you have to look at ground meaning the bible you mean how do you meet christians who have this phobia or they won't admit that phobia but like it seems to me obvious what's going on yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah to be honest yeah to be honest i think the battle goes on even if they're left behind the battle goes on even if they're left behind even if my grandma is dead now bless her never read a book of philosophy and sort of was or better take my aunt because she's still alive and she's afraid of philosophy she's concerned for me down philosophy and all that and she prays for me every time she sees me and i find it quite amusing i i i given up hope trying to convince her and and make her understand what i'm doing but i think if she at least can get so so so far along that she she's praying for me to do what i'm doing and doing it well or because i need i need prayer not to get too attached to it to be a philosophical christian instead of a christian philosopher i i think she's right in that so i i i i i i i'm happy because there is a real danger definitely but but we shouldn't make everyone philosophers but we we should understand that there are basic philosophical questions even if you don't use the language or the name we need some fundamentalist then just to keep us a little yeah yeah yeah but there are there are certain minds who are more philosophically minded i asked my i asked my first philosophical question when i was five i i i remember walking alongside with my dad it was just a beautiful day and everything was as normal and i just suddenly asked what if all this is not real and the curious mind of a of a of a five year old boy and i i don't think i was very special in that way everyone has how many of you have thought um what if i am just a little piece of something bigger that is something bigger that is something bigger like in many black yeah i always have yeah yeah what about us in this little thing yeah or thought about infinity how far is infinity how far is far what if my life's green what if my life's green yeah i just think my parents are telling monsters and i get away from them yeah i wanted to work out how i could you know find out that that's true that's very nice of you i didn't think but it's i mean we we don't that that's that's humanity we have those questions from early age and they come out in different ways and in different times i've always asked people when i was a little kid i do remember this you know what happens when we die yeah no one like that question metaphysical questions that metaphysical anxiety and i was amazed how many adults just try to avoid them you know especially i was a little kid you know yeah don't corrupt his mind death is a gift and it's a threat at the same time yeah that's what they feel existentialism told us that 100 years ago 200 years ago

almost how about ecclesiastes told us it too many years there you go you're a philosopher you don't have to know about exegetics and stuff biblical history who cares yeah you had a poor recurve you must have done yeah yeah i started reading from my from my from my research and strange enough he was recommended to me by my academic supervisor and he said oh he's a philosopher philosopher slash theologian you might want to read your thesis as I thought what are you studying i'm doing this literature one of the topics is forgetting and forgiveness i've realized it's forgiveness the concept of forgiveness it's originally going to be memory and forgetting but not memory forgetting with forgiveness and kind of grace at the end of it oh that's interesting which i didn't expect

to because i thought god completely left out of my creative thesis i sometimes mentioned oh try this guy and i realized he's a christian and i was like oh well you know so which i never realized so yeah paul vicar is well worth reading you want to read mayor westfall as well then because westfall no he i think he wrote his thesis on vicar and was one of the first evangelicals made sense of i mean this big one is time and narrative but he's also done specific stuff on biblical interpretation like jesus and he always says right beginning i am not a theologian so forgive my mistakes or whatever he could say that 15 years ago but not anymore yeah yeah but he died recently and i think he's brought a lot to literary and biblical interpretation i'm not sure for the biblical side of things which one's worth reading oh yeah biblical theologians read vicar do they i wouldn't remember the title but i know that the leader the leader of swissler wrote also his doctoral thesis on vicar and biblical interpretation what i understand from it is very good i read parts of it he's the easiest one i've read than just my philosophy i'm normally quite difficult to read but i find you find vicar easy easier than some i've read oh it's easy to consider it more difficult well not necessarily but i find him quite hard who's the most intense philosopher you've read is it spinosa because i've heard he's the most talented intense philosophy there would probably be hegel's actually or did you read anything i read a little bit of they're hard to get i think actually derrida is one of the most intense philosophers no he's all over the map he wants to yes beyond ontology ontotheology sorry beyond ontotheology well just to look up no it is beyond the modernist god yeah the kind of god that nietzsche was arguing against yeah well anything on west forward just look at the titles because they're usually quite telling what they're about we have some tapes at lobby that he lectures he did at lobby one on leotard one on the great masters of suspicion of suspicion he has reading the masters of suspicion for lent kind of thing so in lent time he's there's a book about this i think it's reading them in lent and and he's really pulling out of marx nietzsche and freud the sort of healthy criticism of christianity of course he twists it a little bit but he is really engaging with postmodern thought in a fruitful

way he won't stand on his own but he has some good thinking you're you're doing english i think that's a little bit far you would like to read oh yeah you would like to read morland has one good article on biblical interpretation and planting i don't know where it is but what you want to read is kevin van hulser kevin with a k and van hulser like in the dutch name a lot of consonants v a n o o z e r van hulser and he has many books but i think if there a meaning in this text would be very interesting for you he's he's dealing with literary criticism and biblical hermeneutics and he's using planting and he's using derrida and he's using recur and all of these names were mentioned but he's also using augustine and he's also using calvin but yeah he is great you want to read him yeah i don't think he's 50 even which which which one oh the revised version you want to have the right yeah it's a good it's good yeah it looks really it's a bomb we need to have a time of your life van van hooser yeah you want to read van hooser he has one call yeah oh you take it thank you anthony is there a meaning in this text thank you so much that was very great i'm glad you came yeah welcome up to brettan anytime are you are you rested are you