

Study Questions for Philosophy of Religion (Spring 2017)

— Exam 3: Life after Death, Religion and Science, Religion and Morality —

The exam will consist of a set of short answer questions (a brief paragraph each). I am interested in how much you are able to work with the readings for the class and your notes from class. Uninformed opinions are not useful here. You may prepare a 8 ½ x 11 sheet of notes (both sides) to use when writing the exam.

Life after Death

1. Be able to describe the various meanings of “life after death” as mentioned in *RRB*.
2. What are some necessary conditions for personal survival?
3. Why might we think that the self is one’s brain? One’s soul? One’s memories? One’s body? Why might we doubt these various interpretations of the self?
4. What is metaphysical dualism? What reasons support/oppose this view?
5. Is “life after death” possible if the self is entirely physical? Explain.
6. Briefly describe H.H. Price’s argument in his essay on the survival of the soul. What is he arguing for?
7. What problems will the resurrection of the body encounter, according to Linda Badham?
8. What does Badham find problematic in the notion that the soul is all that we need to survive bodily death?
9. Do “out of body” experiences or “near death” experiences offer any empirical support for the belief in an afterlife?
10. What does Sri Aurobindo mean by ‘*prakriti*’ and ‘*purusha*’? How are these related to the question of an afterlife?

Religion and Science

11. Briefly describe Barbour’s four models of the religion/science relationship.
12. Explain the religion/science independence suggested by neo-orthodoxy, existentialism, and Wittgenstein’s linguistic analysis (see *RRB*).
13. Describe and briefly discuss the “boundary questions” that inform a religion/science dialogue (see *RRB*).
14. Describe and critique S. J. Gould’s account of religion and science as NOMA.
15. Why does Richard Dawkins believe that religion and science are bound to fight (and that religion will lose those fights)?
16. What does Dembski mean by “specified complexity”? What is he hoping to prove with this?
17. Describe Kitcher’s response to Intelligent Design theorists like Dembski and Behe.
18. Compare and contrast Dembski and Polkinghorne.
19. Describe and evaluate Lennox’s Type I argument.
20. What is the difference between Lennox’s Type IIA and IIB arguments?

Religion and Morality

21. Briefly compare and contrast the three possible understandings of the source of “religious ethical truth” discussed in *RRB* (pp. 314-16).
22. What is the Divine Command theory? What problems of this theory does an adherent need to address?
23. Is it possible to locate ethical absolutes apart from religion? What are some likely candidates?
24. Assuming that ethical truth comes from the divine, how might humans acquire this truth (according to *RBB*)?
25. How does McIntyre distinguish Nobodaddy and Jupiter from the Judeo-Christian god?
26. Why does McIntyre reject the Divine Command theory (both that of Adams and of Ockham)?
27. What is natural law? How is an ethics built on this?
28. What problems will a proponent of natural law ethics need to address?
29. Be able to briefly describe what Sartre means by ‘anguish’, ‘forlornness’, and ‘despair’.
30. If God does not exist, is everything permitted? What does Sartre believe? What do you believe?