

Moral Theology

Table of Contents

<u>Page 1: Moral Theology</u>	1
<u>Page 2: Moral Theology</u>	3
<u>Page 3: Moral Theology</u>	4
<u>Page 4: Moral Theology</u>	5
<u>Page 5: Moral Theology</u>	6
<u>Page 6: Moral Theology</u>	7
<u>Page 7: Moral Theology</u>	8
<u>Page 8: Moral Theology</u>	9
<u>Page 9: Moral Theology</u>	10
<u>Page 10: Moral Theology</u>	11
<u>Page 11: Moral Theology</u>	12
<u>Page 12: Moral Theology</u>	13
<u>Page 13: Moral Theology</u>	14

Page 1: Moral Theology

Sacred Heart Theological Seminary

Module Three-Moral Theology

Content:

Moral theology seeks to set forth general principles to help individuals make the right decisions and deal with the details of everyday living in a way that is accordance with the Church's dogmatic theology.

Overview:

This course seeks to define and address things such as the different methods of moral discernment, the definitions of right and wrong, good and evil, sin and virtue. Additionally, this course will deal with the goal of life and how it is achieved to determine how man should live.

Goal:

To demonstrate attitudes and intellectual capacities that are compatible with lives of ministerial service.

Learning Objectives:

1. Describe and different schools of moral theology and explain how they organically evolve as systems of thought.
2. Discuss the essential teachings offering in the following subjects: free will, conscience, love, seven deadly sins, Summa theology, Confucius, evil, morality, sexual morality, and natural law.
3. Summarize the moral teachings of St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas
4. Apply Church teaching on responsibility and law to concrete everyday ethical dilemmas.
5. Discuss the religious, secular and philosophical views about conscience as they are linked to a morality inherent in all human beings and to divinity.
6. Outline the debate on the doctrine of free will as it is interpreted with the various branches of Christianity.
7. Compare and contrast philosophical love from religious love
8. Apply Sacred Scripture and examine philosophically how man ought to live
9. Write a discussion paper and term paper on assigned issues within Moral Theology
10. Complete a weekly writing exercise and successfully pass a comprehensive exam

Why study Moral Theology?

In times of moral decay and increasing ethical and integrity compromise, it is necessary the Christian have a correct understanding of Christian morality and conduct. The study of moral theology will add to a knowledge base in ethics and integrity emphasizing wisdom from the sacred scriptures and acceptable Christian behavior to improve ourselves and contribute to the welfare of others.

Page 2: Moral Theology

Assignment # 1

Free Will

http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Moral_theology

Read PP 1-3

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Free_Will_in-theology

Read PP 1-13

1. Discuss why free will in theology is an important part of the study of moral theology.
2. What does omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent mean when Christian describe God?
3. Summarize the doctrine of free will in the various branches of Christianity.
4. Explain what the term “divine monergism” means and which of the Christian branches adhere to this teaching.
5. Discuss the idea of free will from a Roman Catholic perspective.
6. How is free will and grace contrasted the predestination in Reformed Protestant Christianity?
7. Explain what is meant by the term “axiomatic” in Judaism
8. Discuss the two main Hinduism opinions about the concept of free will.
9. Using the table on page 4 and examine the three Protestant beliefs about free will. Argue from your personal experience what you believe to be your belief about free will. Then give a brief rational why you disagree with the others.
10. Who or what is the deciding factor in your future?

Page 3: Moral Theology

Assignment # 2

Conscience

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Conscience>

Read PP 1-35

1. Define conscience and how it is defined in psychological terms
2. Name some of the metaphors for the term conscience
3. Discuss how some Hindu-derived spiritual systems views on conscience.
4. Summarize the secular approach of conscience including psychological, sociological, humanitarian and authoritarian views.
5. Explain St. Tomas of Aquinas thoughts regarded conscience in the 13th century.
6. In your reading of the medieval and philosophical views about conscience, select one or more that you are in most agreement with and defend that position to convince others.
7. Select from the modern philosophical thoughts the least likely acceptable idea from your personal standpoint. Point out why you disagree with his or her philosophical ideas.
8. Discuss some of the objections to John Rawls' *Theory of Justice*
9. Explain your reaction to the concept of a world conscience.
10. Cite at least four examples of notable modern acts based on conscience

Page 4: Moral Theology

Assignment # 3

Love

Read: PP1-10

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Love>

1. Define love from a philosophical and religious context.
2. Discuss why the word love is unusually difficult to define.
3. How did St. Thomas Aquinas, following Aristotle define love?
4. Explain the term “impersonal love.”
5. Recall what disciplines throughout history have done the most speculation on the phenomenon of love.
6. Explain the recent studies in neuroscience about people who fall in love.
7. Identify and discuss the three stages of love
8. Discuss the triangular theory of love and whether or not you agree or disagree with psychologist Robert Sternberg.
9. Summarize the various cultural views about love
10. Discuss the various scientific models of love and select the model that you personally feel is the ideal model.
11. Name and explain the Greek words for “love” that are regularly referred to in Christian circles.
12. Discuss the Christian understanding of love including what the Apostles Paul, John and St. Augustine had to say on the subject.
13. Explain what St. Augustine had to say about love and lust.
14. Identify the name of the books written by C.S. Lewis and Benedict XVI.
15. Summarize the Buddhism and Hinduism view on love

Page 5: Moral Theology

Assignment #4

Seven Deadly Sins

Read PP 1-13

1. List the final version of the seven deadly sins.
2. Explain how the Catholic Church divided sin into two principal categories.
3. List the list of bad things given by the Epistle to the Galatians (Galatians 5:19-21).
4. Name the seven holy virtues in the modern Roman Catholic catechism.
5. Define the Greek term "Acedia including how Thomas Aquinas described the term.
6. Identify the two vices that Andrew Culbertson argued should be added to the deadly sins.
7. According to a 2009 study by a Jesuit scholar, the most common deadly sin confessed by men is lust, and for women pride. Assuming this study is valid, why do you think lust and pride were the most common?
8. Discuss why in your opinion all people have a tendency to sin.
9. Has Church teaching of the seven deadly sins over played having a guilty conscience?
10. Explain why Catholics teach that mortal sin without the sacrament of Penance will lead to eternal damnation.

Page 6: Moral Theology

Assignment # 5

St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Aquinas

Read PP 1-18

1. Discuss why Thomas Aquinas is held to be the model teacher for those studying for the priesthood?
2. Discuss the early years of Thomas Aquinas and his desire to become a priest.
3. Summarize Thomas Aquinas's epistemology, revelation, creation and ethics.
4. List Thomas Aquinas' four cardinal virtues and three theological virtues.
5. Discuss Aquinas' ultimate goals of theology.
6. Cite the five reasons given by Aquinas in the *Summa Theologica* for the existence of God.
7. Discuss what Aquinas argued about the Trinity.
8. Describe the goals of human life according to Aquinas.
9. Explain what G.K. Chesterton claimed about Aquinas.
10. Explain the purpose of *Summa Theologiae*.

Page 7: Moral Theology

Assignment # 6

Discussion Paper

Ethical Thinking

Our readings suggest that there are four sources for ethical thinking in the Christian tradition namely, scripture, reason, tradition and experience. Are there other considerations that have not been articulated? Do you agree that tradition should be a source in deciding ethical questions? In reviewing the sources above, does one stand out that may override the others. If so, explain why.

2. Socrates position on ethics consists of knowing what we ought to do. Can ethics be taught? How does one teach what we ought to do? What is the standard used today in determining if one is ethical or not? Do you agree with this standard, if not, why not? What standard should be used?

Please limit your paper to 4-5 pages.

Page 8: Moral Theology

Assignment # 7

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Natural_law

Read PP 1-17

Natural Law

1. Explain why natural law has validity everywhere.
2. Compare and contrast natural law with common law.
3. Name the person credited with being the father of natural law
4. Summarize the evidence of natural law from Aristotle's *Rhetoric*
5. Discuss the tradition of the Stoic natural law
6. Discuss Cicero thoughts and purpose of justice and law
7. Discuss how St. Thomas Aquinas in his *Summa Theologiae* restored Natural Law to its independent state.
8. Explain why property was an important consideration for St. Germain in the law of reason
9. State the Golden Rule or the fundamental natural legal maxim
10. Select one of the most appealing of the nineteen Laws of Nature used by Thomas Hobbes and explain why you selected it from the others.
11. According to Aquinas, "to lack any of the Cardinal virtues is to lack the ability to make a moral choice." Why do you agree or disagree with his statement?
12. Discuss why natural law was important in the development of the English common law.

Page 9: Moral Theology

Assignment # 8

Catholic Teaching on Sexual Morality

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catholic_teaching_on_sexual_morality

Read PP 1-8

1. Name the three areas Catholic teaching on sexual morality draws from and identify the promulgated authority?
2. Explain why the Catholic Church teaches that human life and human sexuality are both inseparable and sacred.
3. Name the sins gravely contrary to chastity.
4. List and discuss the Sacred scripture verses that are frequently cited in Catholic studies of sexual morality
5. Cite the Scriptural passage that describes a critical turning point for Augustine of Hippo in his change of sexual morality
6. Summarize what Saint Thomas writes in his *Summa Theologiae* about chastity.
7. Discuss what Pope John Paul wrote that was at the center of spirituality of marriage.
8. Define the term “nuptial act” and list several transgressions and sins against it.
9. What is the central point of Pope Paul II teaching in *Familiaris Consortio*?
10. Discuss why homosexual acts are described as acts of depravity.

Page 10: Moral Theology

Assignment # 9

Morality

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Morality>

Read PP 1-10

1. Differentiate between morality, moral code, and moral.
2. Summarize the three principal meanings of morality
3. Compare and contrast the tribal and territorial moralities
4. Explain why morality is not absolute.
5. Discuss the phenomenon of “reciprocity” in nature and give an example from the reading assignment.
6. Explain the value of mirror-neurons from a psychiatric perspective
7. Summarize the modern moral psychology morality theories going through states of different morals.
8. Discuss the evidence found on the relationship between liberal and conservatives on morality.
9. Discuss and give examples of the moral codes some religious communities claim are Divine because they provide principles through revelation.
10. List at least eight examples of moral codes found in your readings

Page 11: Moral Theology

Assignment # 10

Evil

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Evil>

Read PP 1-8

1. Define the term “evil.”
2. Explain why there is no agreement about whether evil is a matter of social custom or universally correct principle that overrides custom.
3. Name some of the evil active forces often personalized in some religions as an entity.
4. Explain what evil consists of in the Judeo-Christian tradition
5. Discuss what Benedict de Spinoza said the difference is between good and evil.
6. Explain Carl Jung’s depiction of evil in his book Answer to Job
7. Explain the four views on the nature of evil.
8. State your opinion on the following statement by Bernard Gert, “preventing evil is more important than promoting good in formulating moral rules and in conduct.”
9. Name the acts that were considered evil that have been termed as acceptable in some societies at different times.
10. Summarize how psychiatrist M. Scott Peck describes evil called “militant ignorance.”
11. Summarize the various religious concepts of evil
12. Discuss your personal views about the scriptural reference that “Satan roams about the world like a roaring lion seeking whom he can devour.” (1Peter 5:8)
13. Is it possible for Satan to change his mind and repent? In addition to your personal opinion, ask a number of your friends what their opinion is on this question.

Page 12: Moral Theology

Assignment # 11

Confucius

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Confucius>

Read PP 1-13

1. Discuss what Confucius emphasized in his philosophy
2. Discuss one of the deepest teachings of Confucius over explicit rules of behavior.
3. Recall from your readings the actual name of Confucius
4. Explain the Confucian theory of ethics expressed in three important conceptual aspects of life.
5. Identify what Confucius' philosophy is known as today
6. Explain why Confucius is considered the greatest master by the Chinese people.
7. Explain what is meant by the Silver Rule.
8. Confucius's teachings were turned into an elaborate set of rules and practices called what?

Page 13: Moral Theology

Assignment #12

Term Paper

- What is the good or ultimate end for human beings?
- What is our starting point ('the human condition')?
- What things or objects must we possess to be fully happy?
- Is there a philosopher or teacher today that offers acceptable moral theology for us to treasure? Why have our studies centered upon ancient philosophers?