

1: Religion and Political Theory (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)

*Religion, Politics, and the Moral Life (Selected Writings of Michael Oakeshott) [Michael Oakeshott, Timothy Fuller] on www.enganchecubano.com *FREE* shipping on qualifying offers. Michael Oakeshott's interest in religion and theology was especially prominent in his essays of the s and s.*

References and Further Reading 1. Establishment and Separation of Church and State While the topic of establishment has receded in importance at present, it has been central to political thought in the West since at least the days of Constantine. These arrangements include the following: A church may be supported through taxes and subject to the direction of the government for example, the monarch is still officially the head of the Church of England, and the Prime Minister is responsible for selecting the Archbishop of Canterbury. Particular ecclesiastical officials may have, in virtue of their office, an established role in political institutions. A church may simply have a privileged role in certain public, political ceremonies for example, inaugurations, opening of parliament, etc. What is central to them is they each involve the conferral of some sort of official status. A weaker form of an established church is what Robert Bellah Contemporary philosophical defenses of outright establishment of a church or faith are few, but a famous defense of establishment was given by T. Eliot in the last century , Trained as a philosopher he completed, but did not defend, a dissertation at Harvard on the philosophy of F. Bradley and deeply influenced by Aristotle , Eliot believed that democratic societies rejected the influence of an established church at their peril, for in doing so they cut themselves off from the kind of ethical wisdom that can come only from participation in a tradition. Even today, there are strains of conservatism that argue for establishment by emphasizing the benefits that will accrue to the political system or society at large Scruton, According to this line of thought, the healthy polis requires a substantial amount of pre- or extra-political social cohesion. More specifically, a certain amount of social cohesion is necessary both to ensure that citizens see themselves as sufficiently connected to each other so that they will want to cooperate politically , and to ensure that they have a common framework within which they can make coherent collective political decisions. This cohesion in turn is dependent on a substantial amount of cultural homogeneity, especially with respect to adherence to certain values. One way of ensuring this kind of homogeneity is to enact one of the forms of establishment mentioned above, such as displaying religious symbols in political buildings and monuments, or by including references to a particular religion in political ceremonies. Rather than emphasizing the distinctively political benefits of establishment, a different version of this argument could appeal to the ethical benefits that would accrue to citizens themselves as private individuals. For example, on many understandings of politics, one of the purposes of the polis is to ensure that citizens have the resources necessary for living a choiceworthy, flourishing life. One such resource is a sense of belonging to a common culture that is rooted in a tradition, as opposed to a sense of rootlessness and social fragmentation Sandel, ; MacIntyre, Thus, in order to ensure that citizens have this sense of cultural cohesion, the state must or at least may in some way privilege a religious institution or creed. Of course, a different version of this argument could simply appeal to the truth of a particular religion and to the good of obtaining salvation, but given the persistent intractability of settling such questions, this would be a much more difficult argument to make. Against these positions, the liberal tradition has generally opposed establishment in all of the aforementioned forms. Contemporary liberals typically appeal to the value of fairness. It is claimed, for example, that the state should remain neutral among religions because it is unfairâ€”especially for a democratic government that is supposed to represent all of the people composing its demosâ€”to intentionally disadvantage or unequally favor any group of citizens in their pursuit of the good as they understand it, religious or otherwise Rawls, Similarly, liberals often argue that fairness precludes devoting tax revenues to religious groups because doing so amounts to forcing non-believers to subsidize religions that they reject. If all people have such a right, then it is morally wrong for the state to force them to participate in religious practices and institutions that they would otherwise oppose, such as forcing them to take part in public prayer. It is also wrong, for the same reason, to force people to support financially via taxation religious institutions and communities that they would not otherwise wish to support. In addition, there are liberal consequentialist

concerns about establishment, such as the possibility that it will result in or increase the likelihood of religious repression and curtailment of liberty Audi, While protections and advantages given to one faith may be accompanied by promises to refrain from persecuting adherents of rival faiths, the introduction of political power into religion moves the state closer to interferences which are clearly unjust, and it creates perverse incentives for religious groups to seek more political power in order to get the upper hand over their rivals. From the perspective of many religious people themselves, moreover, there are worries that a political role for their religion may well corrupt their faith community and its mission. Toleration and Accommodation of Religious Belief and Practice As European and American societies faced the growing plurality of religious beliefs, communities, and institutions in the early modern era, one of the paramount social problems was determining whether and to what extent they should be tolerated. A political exile himself at the time of its composition, Locke argues a that it is futile to attempt to coerce belief because it does not fall to the will to accept or reject propositions, b that it is wrong to restrict religious practice so long as it does not interfere with the rights of others, and c that allowing a wide range of religious groups will likely prevent any one of them from becoming so powerful as to threaten the peace. Central to his arguments is a Protestant view of a religious body as a voluntary society composed only of those people who choose to join it, a view that is in sharp contrast to the earlier medieval view of the church as having authority over all people within a particular geographic domain. In contrast to Locke, Thomas Hobbes sees religion and its divisiveness as a source of political instability, and so he argues that the sovereign has the right to determine which opinions may be publicly espoused and disseminated, a power necessary for maintaining civil peace see *Leviathan* xviii, 9. Like the issue of establishment, the general issue of whether people should be allowed to decide for themselves which religion to believe in has not received much attention in recent times, again because of the wide consensus on the right of all people to liberty of conscience. However, despite this agreement on liberty of belief, modern states nevertheless face challenging questions of toleration and accommodation pertaining to religious practice, and these questions are made more difficult by the fact that they often involve multiple ideals which pull in different directions. Some of these questions concern actions which are inspired by religion and are either obviously or typically unjust. For example, violent fundamentalists feel justified in killing and persecuting infidels—how should society respond to them? While no one seriously defends the right to repress other people, it is less clear to what extent, say, religious speech that calls for such actions should be tolerated in the name of a right to free speech. A similar challenge concerns religious objections to certain medical procedures that are necessary to save a life. While it seems clearly wrong to force someone to undergo even lifesaving treatment if she objects to it at least with sufficient rationality, which of course is a difficult topic in itself, and it seems equally wrong to deny lifesaving treatment to someone who needs it and is not refusing it, the issue becomes less clear when parents have religious objections to lifesaving treatment for their children. In such a case, there are at least three values that ordinarily demand great respect and latitude: For example, Quakers and other religious groups are committed to pacifism, and yet many of them live in societies that expect all male citizens to serve in the military or register for the draft. Other groups perform religious rituals that involve the use of illegal substances, such as peyote. Is it fair to exempt such people from the burdens other citizens must bear? Many examples of this second kind of challenge are addressed in the literature on education and schooling. In developed societies and developing ones, for that matter, a substantial education is necessary for citizens to be able to achieve a decent life for themselves. However, the pursuit of this latter goal raises certain issues for religious parents. In the famous case of *Mozert v. Hawkins*, some parents objected for religious reasons to their children being taught from a reading curriculum that presented alternative beliefs and ways of life in a favorable way, and consequently the parents asked that their children be excused from class when that curriculum was being taught. Similarly, many proposals for educational curricula are aimed at developing a measure of autonomy in children, which often involves having them achieve a certain critical distance from their family background, with its traditions, beliefs, and ways of life Callan, ; Brighouse, The idea is that only then can children autonomously choose a way of life for themselves, free of undue influence of upbringing and custom. A related argument holds that this critical distance will allow children to develop a sufficient sense of respect for different social groups, a

respect that is necessary for the practice of democratic citizenship. However, this critical distance is antithetical to authentic religious commitment, at least on some accounts see the following section. Also, religious parents typically wish to pass on their faith to their children, and doing so involves cultivating religious devotion through practices and rituals, rather than presenting their faith as just one among many equally good or true ones. For such parents, passing on their religious faith is central to good parenting, and in this respect it does not differ from passing on good moral values, for instance. Thus, politically mandated education that is aimed at developing autonomy runs up against the right of some parents to practice their religion and the right to raise their children as they choose. Many, though not all, liberals argue that autonomy is such an important good that its promotion justifies using techniques that make it harder for such parents to pass on their faith—such a result is an unfortunate side-effect of a desirable or necessary policy. Yet a different source of political conflict for religious students in recent years concerns the teaching of evolution in science classes. Some religious parents of children in public schools see the teaching of evolution as a direct threat to their faith, insofar as it implies the falsity of their biblical-literalist understanding of the origins of life. They argue that it is unfair to expect them to expose their children to teaching that directly challenges their religion and to fund it with their taxes. Among these parents, some want schools to include discussions of intelligent design and creationism some who write on this issue see intelligent design and creationism as conceptually distinct positions; others see no significant difference between them, while others would be content if schools skirted the issue altogether, refusing to teach anything at all about the origin of life or the evolution of species. Their opponents see the former proposal as an attempt to introduce an explicitly religious worldview into the classroom, hence one that runs afoul of the separation of church and state. Nor would they be satisfied with ignoring the issue altogether, for evolution is an integral part of the framework of modern biology and a well-established scientific theory. Conflicts concerning religion and politics arise outside of curricular contexts, as well. For example, in France, a law was recently passed that made it illegal for students to wear clothing and adornments that are explicitly associated with a religion. This law was especially opposed by students whose religion explicitly requires them to wear particular clothing, such as a hijab or a turban. The justification given by the French government was that such a measure was necessary to honor the separation of church and state, and useful for ensuring that the French citizenry is united into a whole, rather than divided by religion. However, it is also possible to see this law as an unwarranted interference of the state in religious practice. If liberty of conscience includes not simply a right to believe what one chooses, but also to give public expression to that belief, then it seems that people should be free to wear clothing consistent with their religious beliefs. Crucial to this discussion of the effect of public policy on religious groups is an important distinction regarding neutrality. The liberal state is supposed to remain neutral with regard to religion as well as race, sexual orientation, physical status, age, etc. In one sense, neutrality can be understood in terms of a procedure that is justified without appeal to any conception of the human good. In this sense, it is wrong for the state to intend to disadvantage one group of citizens, at least for its own sake and with respect to practices that are not otherwise unjust or politically undesirable. Thus it would be a violation of neutrality in this sense and therefore wrong for the state simply to outlaw the worship of Allah. Alternatively, neutrality can be understood in terms of effect. The state abides by this sense of neutrality by not taking actions whose consequences are such that some individuals or groups in society are disadvantaged in their pursuit of the good. For a state committed to neutrality thus understood, even if it were not explicitly intending to disadvantage a particular group, any such disadvantage that may result is a *prima facie* reason to revoke the policy that causes it. The attendance requirement may nevertheless be unavoidable, but as it stands, it is less than optimal. Obviously, this is a more demanding standard, for it requires the state to consider possible consequences—both short term and long term—on a wide range of social groups and then choose from those policies that do not have bad consequences or the one that has the fewest and least bad. For most, and arguably all, societies, it is a standard that cannot feasibly be met. Consequently, most liberals argue that the state should be neutral in the first sense, but it need not be neutral in the second sense. Thus, if the institutions and practices of a basically just society make it more challenging for some religious people to preserve their ways of life, it is perhaps regrettable, but not unjust, so long as these institutions and practices are justified

impartially. Liberalism and Its Demands on Private Self-Understanding In addition to examining issues of toleration and accommodation on the level of praxis, there has also been much recent work about the extent to which particular political theories themselves are acceptable or unacceptable from religious perspectives. Rather than requiring citizens to accept any particular comprehensive doctrine of liberalism, a theory of justice should aim at deriving principles that each citizen may reasonably accept from his or her own comprehensive doctrine. The aim, then, for a political conception of justice is for all reasonable citizens to be able to affirm principles of justice without having to weaken their hold on their own private comprehensive views. One such argument comes from Eomann Callan, in his book *Creating Citizens*. If Rawlsian liberalism requires acceptance of the burdens of judgment, then the overlapping consensus will not include some kinds of religious citizens. Thus, a religious citizen could feel an acute conflict between her identity qua citizen and qua religious adherent. One way of resolving the conflict is to argue that one aspect of her identity should take priority over the other. For many religious citizens, political authority is subservient to—and perhaps even derived from—divine authority, and therefore they see their religious commitments as taking precedence over their civic ones. But this tendency makes it more challenging for liberals to adjudicate conflicts between religion and politics. One possibility is for the liberal to argue that the demands of justice are prior to the pursuit of the good which would include religious practice. If so, and if the demands of justice require one to honor duties of citizenship, then one might argue that people should not allow their religious beliefs and practices to restrict or interfere with their roles as citizens.

Religious Reasons in Public Deliberation One recent trend in democratic theory is an emphasis on the need for democratic decisions to emerge from processes that are informed by deliberation on the part of the citizenry, rather than from a mere aggregation of preferences. As a result, there has been much attention devoted to the kinds of reasons that may or may not be appropriate for public deliberation in a pluralistic society. While responses to this issue have made reference to all kinds of beliefs, much of the discussion has centered on religious beliefs. One reason for this emphasis is that, both historically and in contemporary societies, religion has played a central role in political life, and often it has done so for the worse witness the wars of religion in Europe that came in the wake of the Protestant Reformation, for example.

2: The Real Origins of the Religious Right - POLITICO Magazine

Religion, Politics and the Moral Life comprises previously unpublished (along with a few previously published and distributed among a very small circle) essays concerning the changing place of religion in Western history and social life, Oakeshott's theory of what entails a "social" being, and the differences between morality and religion.

As the scholar Diana Eck reminds us, for most of our history our religious discourse was dominated by a culturally conservative European heritage—people like me. Alternative visions of faith rarely reached the mainstream. That has changed markedly as we steam deeper into the twenty-first century. Almost 80 percent of Americans still identify themselves as Christians, but they are a far more motley lot than the mainstream media understand or report. Other faiths are now making their presence felt, and our religious landscape is being re-created right before our eyes. Travel the country as I do as a journalist and you see an America dotted with mosques—in places like Toledo, Phoenix, and Atlanta. By one estimate, there are , religious congregations of one kind or another across the country, and that roughly million people attend worship services regularly. It is important, therefore, to keep reminding ourselves that in the Abrahamic tradition the first murder arose out of a religious act. Adam and Eve have two sons. Cain, a farmer, offers the first fruits of the soil. Abel, a shepherd, offers the first lamb from the flock. Cain is so jealous that their rivalry leads to violence and ends in death. Religion has a healing side; we know this. But it also has a killing side. As I write, conservative Christians have been pressing their agenda toward political outcomes, first through the Republican primary campaign and in local elections as well. For example, I read on the website [bullyingstatistics](#). By now this is a familiar tactic: We Americans have wrestled from the very beginning of our country with the best ways to protect the church and state from encroaching on each other. Some of our forebears feared the church would corrupt the state. Others feared the state would corrupt the church. Churches and religious zealots did get punitive laws passed against what they said were moral and religious evils: But churches also fought to end slavery, help workers organize, and pass progressive laws. Government had its favorites at times; for much of our history, it privileged the Protestant majority. As we argue over how to respect religious liberty, including the liberty not to believe, these thoughtful Rules for Mixing Religion and Politics call on us to acknowledge the tensions that are inherent to protecting in law and policy both freedom of religion and freedom from religion. We can simultaneously share a strong commitment to religious liberty, while disagreeing over the application of that principle in a given circumstance. Over many years of covering these issues, I know that Americans can talk about their beliefs in public without politicizing religion or polarizing the community; I have seen and heard them do it. From experience I know that seriously religious people can press their argument in the public sphere without advocating injury to others. And we can engage with others in serious conversation about the most deeply felt subjects and truly challenge each other, teach each other, and learn from each other. As Salman Rushdie told me in an interview: In free societies you must have the free play of ideas, there must be an argument, and it must be impassioned and untrammelled. Free societies are dynamic, noisy, turbulent, and full of radical disagreement. So—let there be Rules. The First Amendment to the Constitution guarantees the free exercise of religion and prohibits the establishment of religion by the government. These two principles work together to protect religious freedom and a thriving and diverse religious landscape. Most Americans embrace freedom of religious expression and the separation of church and state, but the application of these principles in electoral, political and policy settings is a perennial source of controversy. The appropriate role for religion and religious language in political debate is often the source of confusion and conflict across the political spectrum, particularly as our communities grow more diverse religiously. The line between an appropriate accommodation of religion and an inappropriate establishment is not always clear; good faith policymakers frequently engage in complex efforts to balance competing interests. These Rules reflect our understanding of the Constitution and the body of federal court cases on religious liberty as well as our judgment on issues beyond the law. Some things that are legally permissible may still be damaging to religious tolerance and civic discourse, and should be discouraged. We do not believe it was unconstitutional, as some argued, for Texas Gov. Rick Perry to launch his presidential

bid with an exclusionary prayer rally sponsored by religiously divisive voices; we do think it was an unfortunate, unwise, and inappropriate decision for someone who was seeking to be president of all Americans. It is important to acknowledge that some situations bring the principles of free expression and nonestablishment into creative tension, and there is room for principled disagreement about just where the lines should be drawn in a given circumstance. Judges as well as policymakers wrestle with these complexities. Other public officials, like teachers and school administrators, often face situations with more ambiguities than bright lines. That lack of clarity, especially when exacerbated by misleading political rhetoric, can lead to bad decisions. Sometimes these mistakes are easily corrected; sometimes they are resolved through litigation. People For the American Way Foundation has participated in several projects over the years in which advocates from across the political and religious spectrum have worked to minimize these mistakes by clarifying the state of the law in legal guides for school officials. Misinformation and misunderstanding can also lead to divisive rhetoric. Sometimes media wrongly portray policy debates as if there are religious voices on only one side of the issue. These are recurring issues. As leaders of an organization whose board and membership include Catholics, Jews and mainstream and evangelical Protestants, we feel this false dichotomy most strongly. Because many Americans derive their values from their faith, religious people and religious beliefs have always played a significant role in American politics and culture, and in fact have been at the forefront of many justice-seeking movements. It is unavoidable that religion and politics will mix. The question is whether they will mix in ways that promote the common good and are true to the spirit of the Constitution, or whether they mix in ways that divide Americans along lines of faith and undermine our sense of community. America is a religiously pluralistic country, with increasing numbers of adherents to minority faiths and a significant and growing number of people who claim no religious affiliation. At the same time, efforts to use religious language and imagery to motivate political involvement have flourished on all points of the political spectrum. All that civic engagement makes it even more important that Americans figure out how to mix religion and politics in ways that respect constitutional principles and democratic values. All Americans, religious or non-religious, should be welcomed to play an active role in their communities and the political life of our nation. These rules are an effort to create guidelines that can build a better, more productive, less divisive public conversation. There can be no religious test for public office, nor a religious test for participation in the political process. Even still, some states kept religious tests on the books well into the 20th century. Some religious leaders and public officials have asserted a de facto religious test for public office, insisting that American Christians must vote for Christian politicians. Some evangelical activists have suggested that it would be wrong, for example, for a Christian to vote for a Mormon presidential candidate, because having a Mormon president might lead people to adopt his faith. One declared candidate in the presidential race announced that he would not appoint a Muslim to his cabinet; other presidential candidates in the past have said they would not permit Hindus or atheists to serve. No American should be discouraged or barred from participation in the political process simply on account of their religious views. The Constitution explicitly forbids the requiring of any religious test as a qualification for holding office. To impose such a test by popular vote is as bad as to impose it by law. To vote either for or against a man because of his creed is to impose upon him a religious test and is a clear violation of the spirit of the Constitution. While it is appropriate to discuss the moral dimensions of public policy issues, religious doctrine alone is not an acceptable basis for government policy. Because government represents all the people, not just those who share the faith of particular government officials, and because the First Amendment prevents the government from establishing religion, it is inappropriate for government policy to be based solely on religious doctrine. Debates over who speaks for God or who has a superior interpretation of scripture should not form the basis for policymaking. This does not mean that government officials and other players in policy debates are expected to abandon their faith as the price for taking part in the political process—or that it is inappropriate to talk about moral or religious values in politics. Laws prohibiting murder and stealing, as well as laws protecting worker safety and the environment, reflect moral judgments. Those judgments may be rooted in specific religious teaching for some people, but they are also shared broadly across religious and secular lines. In contrast, some elected officials have cited the Bible story of the great flood as a definitive

argument against government policy to address global warming. At a hearing, Rep. In , Maryland State Senator and American University law professor Jamie Raskin was asked to testify before a Maryland senate committee considering a proposed amendment to the state constitution to prohibit same-sex couples from getting married. For me, this is an issue solely based on religious principles. But they must respect that not all Americans share their faith, and that even Americans who share their faith might well disagree with their political position on any given issue. This is an area in which there is a clear distinction between what is legal and what is wise or responsible. Claims to speak for God in public policy are protected as free speech by the First Amendment, but that does not mean they will lead to constructive debate or effective policy. Public officials have every right to express their personal religious beliefs, and no right to use the power of their office to proselytize or coerce others to adopt any religious beliefs or practices Public officials are free to talk about their faith, the role it plays in their lives, and how it influences their approach to issues, but must not use the power of their office to proselytize or impose particular religious beliefs or practices on others. This principle is sometimes neglected by those who should know better. Some judges, for example, have inappropriately posted statements of religious dogma on the walls of their courtrooms. Former and running again in Alabama Chief Justice Roy Moore was removed from office after he defied federal court orders to remove a religious display of the Ten Commandments that he had installed, in the middle of the night, in his courthouse rotunda. Public officials who assert the supremacy of their faith over the faith of others risk alienating some of their constituents. Courts have held that the Constitution does not prohibit officials from making references to religion in their official capacities. Government institutions must show neither official approval nor disapproval of religion, or favor one religion over another Government should not take sides when it comes to religion, either to favor one particular religion or to favor religious people generally over nonreligious people. This fundamental principle finds its legal roots in the First Amendment to the Constitution. Government can run afoul of that prohibition in two principal ways. One is excessive entanglement with religious institutions. The second and more direct infringement is government endorsement or disapproval of religion. Endorsement sends a message to non-adherents that they are outsiders, not full members of the political community, and an accompanying message to adherents that they are insiders, favored members of the political community. Disapproval sends the opposite message. This basic principle of church-state separation continues to be contested by some who argue that it is permissible and desirable for the government to promote or favor religion, a narrative of America going back to the Puritans. Recent policies that would reflect inappropriate government favoritism toward religion include prisoners getting favored treatment for enrolling in religious programs or most instances of government-funded religious organizations receiving special exemptions from laws and regulations that apply to other nonprofit organizations. Houses of worship are exempt from civil rights laws in some areas directly related to their religious mission—notably the hiring of clergy—but they do not and should not get a blanket exemption from government regulation. Public schools are often an arena for conflicts on church-state issues. Students in public schools are free to share their faith with other students, to pray over lunch, and to start religious clubs if their high school permits other non-curricular clubs. But public schools may not require students to participate in any religious activity.

3: Religion and Politics | Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy

English philosopher and political theorist who wrote about philosophy of history, philosophy of religion, aesthetics, and philosophy of law. He is widely regarded as one of the most important conservative thinkers of the 20th century, although he has sometimes been characterized as a liberal thinker.

There are many types of religious values. Modern monotheistic religions, such as Islam, Judaism, Christianity and to a certain degree others such as Sikhism define right and wrong by the laws and rules set forth by their respective gods and as interpreted by religious leaders within the respective faith. Polytheistic religious traditions tend to be less absolute. For example, within Buddhism, the intention of the individual and the circumstances play roles in determining whether an action is right or wrong. For modern Westerners, who have been raised on ideals of universality and egalitarianism, this relativity of values and obligations is the aspect of Hinduism most difficult to understand. In , Pierre Bayle asserted that religion "is neither necessary nor sufficient for morality". For example, The Westminster Dictionary of Christian Ethics says that, For many religious people, morality and religion are the same or inseparable; for them either morality is part of religion or their religion is their morality. For others, especially for nonreligious people, morality and religion are distinct and separable; religion may be immoral or nonmoral, and morality may or should be nonreligious. Even for some religious people the two are different and separable; they may hold that religion should be moral and morality should be, but they agree that they may not be. The proper role of ethical reasoning is to highlight acts of two kinds: For example, there is no absolute prohibition on killing in Hinduism, which recognizes that it "may be inevitable and indeed necessary" in certain circumstances. In the latter case, a study by the Barna Group found that some denominations have a significantly higher divorce rate than those in non-religious demographic groups atheists and agnostics. The ethnocentric views on morality, failure to distinguish between in group and out group altruism, and inconsistent definition of religiosity all contribute to conflicting findings. Furthermore, some studies have shown that religious prosociality is primarily motivated by wanting to appear prosocial, which may be related to the desire to further ones religious group. The egoistically motivated prosociality may also affect self-reports, resulting in biased results. Peer ratings can be biased by stereotypes, and indications of a persons group affiliation are sufficient to bias reporting. Even for people who were nonreligious, those who said they attended religious services in the past week exhibited more generous behaviors. Religious people were less inclined when it came to seeing how much compassion motivated participants to be charitable in other ways, such as in giving money or food to a homeless person and to non-believers. A review of studies on this topic found "The existing evidence surrounding the effect of religion on crime is varied, contested, and inconclusive, and currently no persuasive answer exists as to the empirical relationship between religion and crime. A study by Gregory S. Some works indicate that some societies with lower religiosity have lower crime rates—especially violent crime, compared to some societies with higher religiosity. For example, Simon Blackburn states that "apologists for Hinduism defend or explain away its involvement with the caste system, and apologists for Islam defend or explain away its harsh penal code or its attitude to women and infidels". The Catholic condemnation of birth control, if it could prevail, would make the mitigation of poverty and the abolition of war impossible. The Hindu beliefs that the cow is a sacred animal and that it is wicked for widows to remarry cause quite needless suffering. You find as you look around the world that every single bit of progress in humane feeling, every improvement in the criminal law, every step toward the diminution of war, every step toward better treatment of the colored races, or every mitigation of slavery, every moral progress that there has been in the world, has been consistently opposed by the organized churches of the world. They condemn acts which do no harm and they condone acts which do great harm.

4: Morality and religion - Wikipedia

All the essays probe the meaning of words commonly "but often inappropriately" used in the discussion of political life. Thus Oakeshott explores meanings of religion and worldliness, society and sociality, authority and the state, political activity, and the character of political ideas and political philosophy.

Thus 65 percent of Americans say that religion is important in their daily lives compared to just 17 percent of Swedes, 19 percent of Danes, and 24 percent of Japanese. For a developed country, the U. One may be that they exaggerate their own religiosity in the same way that they claim about twice the attendance rates relative to people actually showing up in church. Immigrant groups that happen to be linguistically isolated may remain quite religious even if the broader society becomes increasingly secular. Yet history counts for little in these matters given that virtually every country has a devout past -- specifically the currently secular countries of Europe. Why religion is emphasized in American politics Religion influences American politics to a degree not seen in other developed countries. Despite the constitutional firewall between church and state, national politicians hardly ever give a major speech without invoking religion. The president is forever asking God to bless America, sending his prayers to victims of disasters, hosting religious leaders, and extolling religious values. Such advocacy of religion is unheard of in Europe but that may be because the majority is no longer religious and because voting members of the native population as distinct from immigrants are not very devout. In America, religion is much more a part of public life whatever the constitution says. There are various reasons for this. One is that evangelical Christians under the banner of the Moral Majority made a determined push to influence political leaders since the s and to inject religion into political debates. This broad agenda animates contemporary right-wing media including talk radio personalities such as Rush Limbaugh and TV channels such as Fox News. The religious propensities of immigrants mean that they are receptive to the conservative religious message and can be induced to vote across class lines. In doing so they support an agenda that favors the wealthy and makes them even poorer. Given this threat from the religious right, Democrats feel pressure to emphasize their own religious credentials, or risk losing a chunk of the poorer immigrant population who make up their natural constituency. According to wits, U. American politicians talk a lot about religion. Yet, they have no more in common with theocrats like the Taliban than ordinary Americans have with the religious fervor of ordinary Afghans. Many poor people in America undermine their economic interests by voting for Republican politicians who are interested in further concentrating wealth in the hands of the affluent. They do so, in part, because the Republicans appeal to their religious propensity. That religious propensity is strengthened by increasing insecurity in the lives of the poor because difficult living conditions are associated with increased religiosity. That seems like another great reason for really separating church and state. Why atheism will replace religion: The triumph of earthly pleasures over pie in the sky.

5: Religion and Morality (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)

The Moral and Political Writings of Mahatma Gandhi, Volume I: Civilization, Politics and Religion ĩ»ĵ Iyer, Raghavan N. () "A Constitution for a Religious and Moral People": Greenawalt and Perry on Politics and Religion ĩ»ĵ.

This asymmetry between the justificatory potential of religious and secular reasons, it is further claimed, should shape the political practice of religious believers. According to advocates of the standard view, citizens should not support coercive laws for which they believe there is no plausible secular rationale, although they may support coercive laws for which they believe there is only a secular rationale. Note that not just any secular rationale counts. For the time being, however, we can get a better feel for the character of the DRR by considering the following case. The Doctrine of Religious Restraint Rick is a politically engaged citizen who intends to vote in a referendum on a measure that would criminalize homosexual relations. As he evaluates the relevant considerations, he concludes that the only persuasive rationale for that measure includes as a crucial premise the claim that homosexual relations are contrary to a God-established natural order. Although he finds that rationale compelling, he realizes that many others do not. But because he takes himself to have a general moral obligation to make those political decisions that, as best he can tell, are both just and good, he decides to vote in favor of criminalization. Moreover, he tries to persuade his compatriots to vote with him. In so doing, he offers relevantly different arguments to different audiences. He tries to convince like-minded citizens by appealing to the theistic natural law argument that he finds persuasive. But he realizes that many of his fellow citizens are unpersuaded by the natural law argument that convinces him. He does so even though he doubts that any of those leveraging arguments are cogent, realizes that many of those to whom he addresses them will have comparable doubts about their cogency, and so believes that many coerced by the law he supports have no good reason, from their perspective, to affirm that law. Rather, it is his decision to support a policy that he believes others have no good reason, from their perspective, to endorse. After all, Rick votes to enact a law that authorizes state coercion even though he believes that the only plausible rationale for that decision includes religious claims that many of his compatriots find utterly unpersuasive. In so doing, Rick violates a normative constraint at the heart of the standard view, viz. For the DRR tells us that, if a citizen is trying to determine whether or not she should support some coercive law, and if she believes that there is no plausible secular rationale for that law, then she may not support it. The DRR is a negative constraint; it identifies a kind of reason that cannot itself justify a coercive law and so a kind of reason on which citizens may not exclusively rely when supporting a coercive law. But this negative constraint is typically conjoined with a permission: It will therefore be helpful to dissociate the DRR from various common misunderstandings. First, the DRR is a moral constraint, one that applies to people in virtue of the fact that they are citizens of a liberal democracy. As such, it need not be encoded into law, enforced by state coercion or social stigma, promoted in state educational institutions, or in any other way policed by the powers that be. Of course, advocates of restraint are free to argue that the state should police violations of the DRR see Habermas , What the DRR does require of citizens is that they reasonably believe that they have some plausible secular rationale for each of the coercive laws that they support, which they are prepared to offer in political discussion. In this respect, the present construal of the DRR is weaker than comparable proposals, such as that developed by Robert Audi, which requires that each citizen have and be motivated by some evidentially adequate secular rationale for each of the coercive laws he or she supports see Audi , and Rawls , ff. Third, the DRR places few restrictions on the content of the secular reasons to which citizens can appeal when supporting coercive laws. That having been said, it is worth stressing that some prominent advocates of the standard view adopt a broadly Rawlsian account of the DRR, according to which coercive laws must be justified by appeal to public reason see Gutmann and Thompson , Larmore , Macedo , and Nussbaum We shall have more to say about this view in section 6. Fourth, the DRR itself has no determinate policy implications; it is a constraint not on legislation itself, but on the configuration of reasons to which agents may appeal when supporting coercive legislation. So, for example, it forbids Rick to support the criminalization of homosexuality when he believes that there are no plausible secular reasons to criminalize it. As such, the moral propriety of the DRR has nothing directly

to do with its usefulness in furthering, or discouraging, particular policy aims. The DRR, then, is a norm that is supposed to provide guidance for how citizens of a liberal democracy should conduct themselves when deliberating about or deciding on the implementation of coercive laws. For our purposes, it will be helpful to work with a canonical formulation of it. Let us, then, formulate the DRR as follows: About this formulation of the DRR, let us make two points. For present purposes, we will simply assume that a plausible rationale is one that epistemically and morally competent peers will take seriously as a basis for supporting a coercive law. Second, according to this formulation of the DRR, a citizen can comply with the DRR even if he himself is not persuaded to support a coercive law for any secular reason. What matters is that he believes that he has and can offer a secular rationale that his secular cohorts can take seriously. Suppose, then, we have an adequate working conception of the DRR. The question naturally arises: Why do advocates of the standard view maintain that we should conform to the DRR? For several reasons, most prominent of which are the following three arguments. Of course, there are many more arguments for the DRR than we can address here. The concern expressed here, presumably, is this: In so doing, these citizens will thereby provoke determined resistance and civil conflict. Such a state of affairs, however, threatens the very viability of a liberal democracy and, so, should be avoided at nearly all costs. Accordingly, religious believers should exercise restraint when deliberating about the implementation of coercive laws. Exercising restraint, however, is best accomplished by adhering to the DRR. According to the liberal critics of the standard view, there are several problems with this argument. First, the liberal critics contend, while there may have been a genuine threat of confessional warfare in 17th century Western Europe, there is little reason to believe that there is any such threat in stable liberal democracies such as the United States. Because confessional conflict, the liberal critics continue, is typically rooted in egregious violations of the right to religious freedom, when, for example, people are jailed, tortured, or otherwise abused because of their religious commitments. John Locke puts the point thus: Locke , If Locke is correct, then what we need to prevent confessional conflict is not compliance with a norm such as the DRR, but firm commitment to the right to religious freedom. A stable liberal democracy such as the United States is, however, fully committed to protecting the right to religious freedom and will be for the foreseeable future. True enough, there are passionately felt disagreements about how to interpret the right to religious freedom: But it is difficult to see, the liberal critics claim, that there is a realistic prospect of these disagreements devolving into violent civil conflict. Second, even if there were a realistic prospect of religious conflict, liberal critics claim that it is unclear that adhering to the DRR would lower the probability that such a conflict would occur. After all, the trigger for religious war is typically, the violation of the right to religious freedom is not always, or even typically, justified by exclusively religious considerations. Third, the liberal critics maintain, when religious believers have employed coercive power to violate the right to religious freedom, they themselves rarely have done so in a way that violates the DRR. Typically, when such rights have been violated, the justifications offered, even by religious believers, appeal to alleged requirements for social order, such as the need for uniformity of belief on basic normative issues. One theological apologist for religious repression, for example, writes this: Ordinarily, the kind of religious persecution that engenders religious conflict is legitimated by appeal to secular reasons of the sort mandated by the DRR. This is the case even when religious actors are the ones who appeal to those secular reasons. Finally, liberal critics point out that some religious believers affirm the right to religious freedom on religious grounds; they take themselves to have powerful religious reason to affirm the right of each person to worship as she freely chooses, absent state coercion. So, for example, the 4th century Nestorian Mar Aba: I preach my faith and want every man to join it. But I want him to join it of his own free will. Still, there may be other evils that are more likely to occur under current conditions, which compliance with the DRR might help to prevent. For example, it is plausible to suppose that the enactment of a coercive law that cannot be justified except on religious grounds would engender much anger and frustration on the part of those coerced: This in turn breeds division between citizens' anger and distrust between citizens who have to find some amicable way to make collective decisions about common matters. This counts in favor of the DRR precisely because compliance with the DRR diminishes the likelihood of our suffering from such bad consequences. To this argument, liberal critics offer a three-part reply. First, suppose it is true that the implementation of coercive laws that can

be justified only on religious grounds often causes frustration and anger among both secular and religious citizens. The liberal critics maintain that there is reason to believe that compliance with the DRR would also engender frustration and anger among other religious and secular citizens. To this end, they point to the fact that many religious believers believe that conforming to the DRR would compromise their loyalty to God: But for many religious believers this is distressing; they take themselves to have overriding moral and religious obligations to obey God. Similarly, some secular citizens will likely be frustrated by the requirement that the DRR places on religious citizens. According to these secular citizens, all citizens have the right to make political decisions as their conscience dictates. And, on some occasions, these secular citizens hold that exercising that right will lead religious citizens to violate the DRR. But, the liberal critics claim, it is doubtful that we have any such reason: Second, the liberal critics argue, there is reason to believe that conformance to the DRR would only marginally alleviate the frustration that some citizens feel when confronted with religious reasons in public political debate. The DRR, after all, does not forbid citizens from supporting coercive laws on religious grounds, nor does it forbid citizens to articulate religious arguments in public. Furthermore, complying with the DRR does not prevent religious citizens from advocating their favored laws in bigoted, inflammatory, or obnoxious manners; it has nothing to say about political decorum. Third, the liberal critics contend that because most of the laws that have a chance of enactment in a society as pluralistic as the United States will have both religious and secular grounds, it will almost never be the case that any of the actual frustration caused by the public presence of religion supports the DRR. Given that the DRR requires not a complete but only a limited privatization of religious belief, very little of the frustration and anger apparently engendered by the public presence of religion counts in favor of the DRR. To which it is worth adding the following point: The complete privatization of religion is much more objectionable to religious citizens and, thus, more likely to create social foment. Rorty, it should be noted, softened his approach on this issue. There are no doubt other factors that need to be taken into consideration in the calculation required to formulate the argument from divisiveness. But, the liberal critics maintain, it is unclear how those disparate factors would add up. In particular, if the liberal critics are correct, it is not clear whether requiring citizens to obey the DRR would result in less overall frustration, anger, and division than would not requiring them to do so. The issues at stake are empirical in character and the relevant empirical facts are not known. Here we focus on only one formulation of the argument, which has affinities with a version of the argument offered by Charles Larmore see Larmore Each citizen deserves to be respected as a person. If each citizen deserves to be respected as a person, then there is a powerful prima facie presumption against the permissibility of state coercion. On this basic claim, See Gaus, , Gaus and Vallier, So, there is a powerful prima facie presumption against the permissibility of state coercion. If the presumption against state coercion is to be overcome as it sometimes must be , then state coercion must be justified to those who are coerced. If state coercion must be justified to those who are coerced, then any coercive law that lacks a plausible secular rationale is morally illegitimate as there will be many to whom such coercion cannot be justified.

6: The Moral Middle – Politics, Life, and a little Religion

Michael Oakeshott, Religion, Politics, and the Moral www.enganchecubano.com Haven: Yale University Press, "Michael Oakeshott's interest in religion and theology was especially prominent in his essays of the s and s. This book consists of four important unpublished pieces, together with six essays by Oakeshott t.

Religion, Politics and Society Chapter 3: Morality Most Muslims agree on certain moral principles. For example, in nearly all countries surveyed, a majority says it is necessary to believe in God to be a moral person. There also is widespread agreement that some behaviors – including drinking alcohol, sex outside marriage, homosexuality and committing suicide – are immoral. There is less agreement, however, when it comes to other moral questions related to marriage and family life. For example, the percentage of Muslims who say that divorce is morally acceptable varies widely among countries. Similarly, Muslims are divided about the acceptability of polygamy and the morality of family planning. God and Morality Muslims widely hold the view that it is necessary to believe in God to be moral and have good values. This is true especially in the countries surveyed in Southeast Asia, where more than nine-in-ten Muslims say it is necessary to believe in God to be a moral person. At least half of Muslims in all the countries surveyed in sub-Saharan Africa accept that personal morality is based on belief in God. In many countries, Muslims who pray several times a day are more likely than those who pray less often to say it is necessary to believe in God to be moral. On this question, there are no consistent differences by age or gender across the countries surveyed. Beliefs About Morality The survey asked Muslims around the world if they considered a range of behaviors to be morally wrong, morally acceptable or not a moral issue. The survey finds that most Muslims agree that certain behaviors – such as drinking alcohol, suicide and sex outside marriage – are morally wrong. However, significant minorities of Muslims in some countries consider such behaviors morally acceptable or say they are not a moral issue. Drinking alcohol Most Muslims surveyed say that drinking alcohol is morally wrong. In addition, in some countries sizable percentages say consuming alcohol is not a moral issue. Suicide and Euthanasia Majorities of Muslims in all countries believe that suicide is morally wrong, including three-quarters or more in 29 of the 37 countries where this question was asked. In only four of the countries where this question was asked do as many as one-in-ten Muslims say suicide is morally acceptable. All four countries are in sub-Saharan Africa: In 13 countries, at least one-in-ten Muslims do not consider suicide to be a moral issue. As with suicide, most Muslims believe that euthanasia – defined in the survey as ending the life of an incurably ill person – is morally wrong. A majority of Muslims in 33 of the 37 countries surveyed hold this view, including more than three-quarters in 17 countries. Substantial minorities, however, do not define euthanasia as a moral issue. Additionally, in six countries, one-in-ten or more volunteer that the moral status of euthanasia depends on the context in which it occurs: Abortion Most Muslims say that having an abortion is morally wrong, including three-quarters or more in 24 of the 37 countries where the question was asked. By contrast, few Muslims say that abortion is morally acceptable. In only five countries do one-in-ten or more say the practice is morally permissible: In 13 countries however, at least one-in-ten Muslims say abortion is not a moral issue. Additionally, in 11 of the countries surveyed, at least one-in-ten Muslims volunteer that the morality of having an abortion depends on the situation. Sex Outside Marriage and Prostitution A strong majority of Muslims in nearly all countries surveyed condemn pre- and extra-marital sex, including three-quarters or more in 29 of the 36 countries where the question was asked. Few Muslims believe sex outside marriage is not a moral issue. In only six of the countries surveyed does more than one-in-ten take this position: Muslims are even more emphatic that prostitution is morally wrong. More than seven-in-ten in each country surveyed say it is immoral. Meanwhile, in a few countries, small percentages of Muslims say prostitution is not a moral issue: Homosexuality Muslims overwhelmingly say that homosexual behavior is morally wrong, including three-quarters or more in 33 of the 36 countries where the question was asked. In most countries surveyed, fewer than one-in-ten Muslims believe homosexual behavior is not a moral issue. Morality and Marriage Although Muslims strongly agree on the morality of a range of behaviors, Muslims hold a range of opinions on the morality of divorce, family planning and polygamy. Divorce In 15 of the 37

countries where the question was asked, at least half of Muslims consider divorce a morally acceptable practice. By contrast, at least half of Muslims in 10 countries believe divorce is morally wrong. In the majority of countries surveyed, at least one-in-five Muslims say divorce is not a moral issue or that it depends on the situation. There is no consistent pattern of differences on this question by age or gender across the countries surveyed. Polygamy Muslims in the countries surveyed are divided on the moral status of polygamy. At the opposite end of the spectrum, at least half of Muslims in 12 countries say polygamy is immoral. Compared with divorce, fewer Muslims believe polygamy is not a moral issue or that it depends on the situation. Still, in 14 of 37 countries at least one-in-five say it is not a moral issue or it depends on the circumstances. In most countries men are more likely than women to say that polygamy is morally acceptable. There are no consistent differences between the beliefs of younger and older Muslims about the moral status of polygamy. Family Planning There is no clear agreement among Muslims in the survey about the morality of family planning. In 17 countries, at least one-in-five Muslims say family planning is not a moral issue or say it depends on the situation. These beliefs are particularly common in the Middle East and North Africa. There are no consistent differences between older and younger Muslims or men and women in their beliefs about the moral status of family planning. Sharia, Morality and the Family The survey finds that Muslims who want sharia to be the official law of the land in their country often have different views from other Muslims about the morality of issues related to marriage and the family. Across countries, however, Muslims who want sharia to be official law do not always take consistent positions on whether divorce and family planning are acceptable practices. Polygamy In many of the countries surveyed, beliefs about the moral status of polygamy are strongly linked to support for sharia as the official law of the land. Muslims who favor Islamic law as the official law in their country are consistently more likely to say polygamy is an acceptable practice than are those who do not want sharia as official law. Divorce On the question of whether divorce is morally acceptable, support for sharia does not have a uniform effect in all countries. Meanwhile, in other countries, especially former communist countries in Southern and Eastern Europe, the opposite is true: The largest differences are in Kazakhstan , Albania and Russia Family Planning In some countries, support for sharia is linked to attitudes on the moral status of family planning. But, as in the case of divorce, how the two are linked differs across countries. Beliefs About Family Honor The survey asked Muslims whether honor killings are ever justified as punishment for pre- or extra-marital sex. Similarly, at least half in 15 of 23 countries say honor killings of accused men are never justified. With the exception of Uzbekistan, attitudes toward the execution of accused men are nearly identical to opinions about accused women in these countries. Muslims in South Asia are less likely to say honor killings of both women and men are never justified. In four of the seven countries where the question was asked in the Middle East-North Africa region, at least half of Muslims say honor killings of accused men are never justified: In three countries surveyed in the Middle East and North Africa, Muslims are significantly more likely to reject honor killings of men than women: Across the countries surveyed, attitudes toward honor killings of women and men are not consistently linked to religious observance. In most countries, Muslims who pray several times a day are just as likely as those who pray less often to say that honor killings are never justified. There also are no consistent differences by age or gender. Large gaps are found in Albania, Tunisia, Tajikistan and Lebanon, among other countries. A hadith in Sahih al-Bukhari The Quran permits men to take up to four wives as long as they can treat all equitably and with justice. However, the traditions hadith of Muhammad do. Though some traditions forbid birth control the majority permit it. Oxford University Press, page Honour, Violence, Women and Islam.

7: Religion, Politics, and the Moral Life by Michael Oakeshott

Note: Citations are based on reference standards. However, formatting rules can vary widely between applications and fields of interest or study. The specific requirements or preferences of your reviewing publisher, classroom teacher, institution or organization should be applied.

Ancient Greek Philosophy We can start with the Greeks, and this means starting with Homer, a body of texts transmitted first orally and then written down in the seventh century BCE. So what does the relation between morality and religion look like in Homer? The first thing to say is that the gods and goddesses of the Homeric poems behave remarkably like the noble humans described in the same poems, even though the humans are mortal and the gods and goddesses immortal. Both groups are motivated by the desire for honor and glory, and are accordingly jealous when they receive less than they think they should while others receive more, and work ceaselessly to rectify this. The two groups are not however symmetrical, because the noble humans have the same kind of client relation to the divinities as subordinate humans do to them. This includes, for example, sanctuaries devoted to them, dedications, hymns, dances, libations, rituals, prayers, festivals and sacrifices. There is a clear analogy with purely human client-relations, which are validated in the Homeric narrative, since the poems were probably originally sung at the courts of the princes who claimed descent from the heroes whose exploits make up the story. The gods and goddesses are not, however, completely at liberty. It is sometimes said that the Presocratic philosophers come out of Homer by rejecting religion in favor of science. When Anaximenes around talks of air as the primary element differing in respect of thinness and thickness, or Heraclitus explains all change as a pattern in the turnings of fire igniting in measures and going out in measures, they are not giving stories with plot-lines involving quasi-human intentions and frustrations DK 13, A 5, DK 22, B But it is wrong to say that they have left religion behind. Heraclitus puts this enigmatically by saying that the one and only wisdom does and does not consent to be called Zeus DK 22, B He is affirming the divinity of this wisdom, but denying the anthropomorphic character of much Greek religion. The sophists, to whom Socrates responded, rejected this tie between human law and divine law and this was in part because of their expertise in rhetoric, by which they taught their students how to manipulate the deliberations of popular assemblies, and so change the laws to their own advantage. The most famous case is Protagoras c. Protagoras is not correctly seen here as skeptical about morality or religion. But as Plato c. His view of what this justice is, namely the interest of the stronger, is disputed by Plato. But the claim that justice operates at both the divine and human levels is common ground. Euthyphro is taking his own father to court for murder, and though ordinary Greek morality would condemn such an action as impiety, Euthyphro defends it on the basis that the gods behave in the same sort of way, according to the traditional stories. Socrates makes it clear that he does not believe these stories, because they attribute immorality to the gods. This does not mean, however, that he does not believe in the gods. He points to the spirit who gives him commands about what not to do Apology, 31d , and we learn later that he found it significant that this voice never told him to stop conducting his trial in the way that in fact led to his death Ibid. Socrates interpreted this as an invitation from the gods to die, thus refuting the charge that, by conducting his trial in the way he did, he was guilty of theft " i. Socrates makes it clear that his view is the second though he does not argue for this conclusion in addressing this question, and he is probably relying on the earlier premise, at Euthyphro, 7c10f, that we love things because of the properties they have. But his view is not an objection to tying morality and religion together. He hints at the end of the dialogue Euthyphro, 13de that the right way to link them is to see that when we do good we are serving the gods well. Plato probably does not intend for us to construe the dialogues together as a single philosophical system, and we must not erase the differences between them. But it is significant that in the Theaetetus b , Socrates says again that our goal is to be as like the god as possible, and since the god is in no way and in no manner unjust, but as just as it is possible to be, nothing is more like the god than the one among us who becomes correspondingly as just as possible. In several dialogues this thought is connected with a belief in the immortality of the soul; we become like the god by paying attention to the immortal and best part of ourselves e. The doctrine of the immortality of the soul is also tied to the doctrine of

the Forms, whereby things with characteristics that we experience in this life e. This train of thought sees the god or gods as like a magnet, drawing us to be like them by the power of their goodness or excellence. Mention of the divine is not merely conventional for Aristotle, but does important philosophical work. In the Eudemian Ethics b5â€”22 he tells us that the goal of our lives is service and contemplation of the god. He thinks that we become like what we contemplate, and so we become most like the god by contemplating the god. Incidentally, this is why the god does not contemplate us; for this would mean becoming less than the god, which is impossible. As in Plato, the well-being of the city takes precedence over the individual, and this, too, is justified theologically. It is nobler and more divine to achieve an end for a city than for an individual NE b9â€” Aristotle draws a distinction between what we honor and what we merely commend NE, b10â€” There are six states for a human life, on a normative scale from best to worst: The highest form of happiness, which he calls blessedness, is something we honor as we honor gods, whereas virtue we merely commend. It would be as wrong to commend blessedness as it would be to commend gods NE, a10â€”a The activity of the god, he says in the Metaphysics, is nous thinking itself b The best human activity is the most god-like, namely thinking about the god and about things that do not change. This gives him a defense against the charge sometimes made against virtue theories that they simply embed the prevailing social consensus into an account of human nature. Aristotle defines ethical virtue as lying in a mean between excess and defect, and the mean is determined by the person of practical wisdom actually the male, since Aristotle is sexist on this point. He then gives a conventional account of the virtues such a person displays such as courage, literally manliness, which requires the right amount of fear and confidence, between cowardice and rashness. It is not clear whether the Nicomachean Ethics has a consistent view of the relation between the activity of contemplation and the other activities of a virtuous life see Hare, God and Morality, chapter 1, and Sarah Broadie, Ethics with Aristotle, chapter 7. But the connection of the highest human state with the divine is pervasive in the text. One result of this connection is the eudaimonism mentioned earlier. If the god does not care about what is not divine for this would be to become like what is not divine , the highest and most god-like human also does not care about other human beings except to the degree they contribute to his own best state. This degree is not negligible, since humans are social animals, and their well-being depends on the well-being of the families and cities of which they are members. Aristotle is not preaching self-sufficiency in any sense that implies we could be happy on our own, isolated from other human beings. But our concern for the well-being of other people is always, for him, contingent on our special relation to them. We therefore do not want our friends to become gods, even though that would be the best thing for them. Finally, Aristotle ties our happiness to our end in Greek, telos ; for humans, as for all living things, the best state is its own activity in accordance with the natural function that is unique to each species. For humans the best state is happiness, and the best activity within this state is contemplation NE, b17â€” The Epicureans and Stoics who followed Aristotle differed with each other and with him in many ways, but they agreed in tying morality and religion together. For the Epicureans, the gods do not care about us, though they are entertained by looking at our tragicomic lives rather as we look at soap operas on television. We can be released from a good deal of anxiety, the Epicureans thought, by realizing that the gods are not going to punish us. Our goal should be to be as like the gods as we can, enjoying ourselves without interruption, but for us this means limiting our desires to what we can obtain without frustration. They did not mean that our happiness is self-interested in any narrow sense, because they held that we can include others in our happiness by means of our sympathetic pleasures. The Stoics likewise tied the best kind of human life, for them the life of the sage, to being like the divine. The sage follows nature in all his desires and actions, and is thus the closest to the divine. Such commands come already in the first chapter of Genesis. In the second chapter God tells Adam that he is free to eat from any tree in the garden, but he must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. When Eve and Adam disobey and eat of that fruit, they are expelled from the garden. There is a family of concepts here that is different from what we met in Greek philosophy. God is setting up a kind of covenant by which humans will be blessed if they obey the commands God gives them. Human disobedience is not explained in the text, except that the serpent says to Eve that they will not die if they eat the fruit, but will be like God, knowing good and evil, and Eve sees the fruit as good for food and pleasing to the eye and desirable for gaining wisdom. After they eat, Adam and Eve

know that they are naked, and are ashamed, and hide from God. As the story goes on, and Cain kills Abel, evil spreads to all the people of the earth, and Genesis describes the basic state as a corruption of the heart 6: Then there is the command to Abraham to kill his son, a deed prevented at the last minute by the provision of a ram instead Gen. Under Moses the people are finally liberated, and during their wanderings in the desert, Moses receives from God the Ten Commandments, in two tables or tablets Exod. The second table concerns our obligations to other human beings, and all of the commands are negative do not kill, commit adultery, steal, lie, or covet except for the first, which tells us to honor our fathers and mothers. The Greeks had the notion of a kingdom, under a human king though the Athenians were in the classical period suspicious of such an arrangement. But they did not have the idea of a kingdom of God, though there is something approaching this in some of the Stoics. This idea is explicable in terms of law, and is introduced as such in Exodus in connection with the covenant on Mt. The kingdom is the realm in which the laws obtain. This raises a question about the extent of this realm. The surrounding laws in the Pentateuch include prescriptions and proscriptions about ritual purity and sacrifice and the use of the land that seem to apply to this particular people in this particular place. But the covenant that God makes with Noah after the flood is applicable to the whole human race, and universal scope is explicit in the Wisdom books, which make a continual connection between how we should live and how we were created as human beings. For example, in Proverbs 8 Wisdom raises her voice to all humankind, and says that she detests wickedness, which she goes on to describe in considerable detail. The New Testament is unlike the Hebrew Bible, however, in presenting a narrative about a man who is the perfect exemplification of obedience and who has a life without sin. New Testament scholars disagree about the extent to which Jesus actually claimed to be God, but the traditional interpretation is that he did make this claim; in any case the Christian doctrine is that we can see in his life the clearest possible revelation in human terms both of what God is like and at the same time of what our lives ought to be like. He takes the commandments inside the heart; for example, we are required not merely not to murder, but not to be angry, and not merely not to commit adultery, but not to lust see Ezekiel Jesus tells us to love our enemies and those who hate and persecute us, and in this way he makes it clear that the love commandment is not based on reciprocity Matt 5: This event is understood in many different ways in the New Testament, but one central theme is that Jesus died on our behalf, an innocent man on behalf of the guilty. Jesus describes the paradigm of loving our neighbors as the willingness to die for them. And we are given the hope of future progress in holiness by the work of the Holy Spirit Rom. All of this theology requires more detailed analysis, but this is not the place for it. There is a contrast between the two traditions I have so far described, namely the Greek and the Judeo-Christian. The idea of God that is central in Greek philosophy is the idea of God attracting us, like a kind of magnet, so that we desire to become more like God, though there is a minority account by Socrates of receiving divine commands. In the Jewish and Christian scriptures, the notion of God commanding us is central. It is tempting to simplify this contrast by saying that the Greeks favor the good, in their account of the relation of morality and religion, and the Judeo-Christian account favors the right or obligation. It is true that the notion of obligation makes most sense against the background of command. The Middle Ages The rest of the history to be described in this entry is a cross-fertilization of these two traditions or lines of thought. In the patristic period, or the period of the early Fathers, it was predominantly Plato and the Stoics amongst the Greek philosophers whose influence was felt. The Eastern and Western parts of the Christian church split during the period, and the Eastern church remained more comfortable than the Western with language about humans being deified in Greek theosis.

8: Religion, Politics and the Moral Life : Michael Oakeshott :

Michael Oakeshott's lifelong interest in religion and its relation to politics is made explicit in this collection of essays. It comprises four important unpublished pieces, together with a further six which originally appeared in remote and inaccessible journals, and provides an illuminating complement to Oakeshott's best-known writings.

Faith and the Campaign GOP candidates seen as religious “ except for Trump The conventional wisdom in American politics has long been that someone who is not religious cannot be elected president of the United States. Most Americans have consistently said that it is important to them that the president have strong religious beliefs. On the other hand, the share of American adults who say they would be less likely to vote for an atheist candidate has been declining over time. These are among the key findings of a new Pew Research Center survey conducted Jan. This is the latest in a long line of research the Center has conducted on the role of religion in presidential campaigns. And in , a majority of the U. The study also shows that having a president who shares their religious beliefs is important to many Americans, with about half of U. At the same time, the new survey also finds that the share of Americans who have reservations about voting for an atheist president has been declining over time. Being seen as a religious person is generally an asset for candidates; people who think a candidate is a religious person tend to be more likely to see that candidate as a potentially good president. But many Republicans think Trump would be a good president despite his perceived lack of religiousness. The pattern is very different for the other leading GOP candidates; virtually all Republicans who think Cruz, Rubio and Carson would be successful presidents and who express a view about their religiousness also say they view those candidates as at least somewhat religious. Evangelicals “ who are among the most reliably Republican religious constituencies in the electorate “ express a similar degree of confidence that Carson and Cruz would be successful presidents. On the Democratic side, the view that Sanders and Clinton would be good presidents is most common among two reliably Democratic religious constituencies “ black Protestants and religiously unaffiliated voters i. The uptick in the view that Clinton is not particularly religious is most pronounced among Republicans, but also seen among Democrats. And most who hold this view “ about half of all U. These figures have not changed much since , but they are considerably different from the results of a survey taken at a similar point in the presidential election cycle. Other key findings include: Candidates are viewed as religious by more people in their own party than the opposing party. Partisans are deeply divided on this question. Two-thirds of Democrats say the GOP has been co-opted by religious conservatives, while most Republicans reject this notion. Conversely, two-thirds of Republicans believe that secular liberals have too much power in the Democratic Party, while two-thirds of Democrats disagree.

9: 12 Rules for Mixing Religion and Politics | People For the American Way

Editorial team. General Editors: David Bourget (Western Ontario) David Chalmers (ANU, NYU) Area Editors: David Bourget Gwen Bradford.

Thomas Breaks the Rules-Premiu Metropolitan Tabernacle Do you know where your ancestors are? Prayer of st francis ryan cayabyab Chandogya upanishad chapter 6 Teens need policing online Kate Fogarty Star wars rebellion objective cards Small group meetings Dark days series jocelynn drake A Law Career Is the Smart Way Transform Your Bathroom In a Weekend Perspectives from the past volume 1 5th edition I Like Outer Space (Things I Like) Mary Kokrak : five brothers and their younger sister Anthony C. Woodbury and Leo Moses Rouben Mamoulian. The keeping of the zoo Family Therapy (Life Balance) Kleppner and kolenkow solution manual Mental Aspects of Youth Soccer Hunting and Fishing from A to Zern Wolfs Bane (Lone Wolf, No 19) Glow in the Dark Sex Coupons The business of teaching sewing Too good to be true Lam Chen Fong Fifty uncommon birds of the upper Midwest V. 1. Zelis; or, The way to be happy. The weathercock. The magic dollar. The Mark of the Wolf Ayurvedic medicine books in telugu Dealing with difference: competing cultures, singular codes Mary A. Olson, Mary L. Mittler U.S. Taiwan relations Country life in classical times Internet Exercise Book to Accompany Contemporary Advertising V. 2. Metabolism. Chapter 5 Waiting on The Promised Land Of fire and stars audrey coulthurst Dutch driving license theory book in english 250 years of brewing in Ipswich Citing Unenacted Federal Bills and Resolutions When Gen-X met the X-Men: retextualizing comic book film reception Neil Rae and Jonathan Gray The commanding self