

Philosophy as a Way of Life

Prof. Redemer

Course Description:

Philosophy at its inception was understood as a way of life, not the reserve of experts. This course recovers this approach to the philosophical enterprise, asking what it means to live philosophically, whilst cultivating bold curiosity. We will cover Pierre Hadot's masterpiece, of course, but also engage reflections of philosophers ranging from ancients like the writer of Ecclesiastes to moderns such as Coleridge as they pursue truth wherever it may lead them. As we shall see this pursuit of truth ultimately means seeing the divine Logos throughout the world and in our lives.

The class will be part lecture, part discussion seminar, depending on the particular subject matter and the disposition of the class and instructor.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course the student will be able to:

- Recognize a distinctly philosophical question
- Ask and answer philosophical questions
- Distinguish between asking “what should we do” and “who should we be” ethical questions
- Raise the question of the relation between the rational and the poetical ability in man
- Recognize the distinctive contribution of protestant reflection to contemporary philosophy
- Understand the structure of an argument

Classroom Decorum:

Philosophical inquiry is a text based, and conversation based endeavor, so you must read and converse (in the form of notes in margins or notebooks) *outside* of class with your texts, in the same way you will be expected to read and converse with your professor and fellow students *in* class.

Required texts to purchase (we will read ~75 pages per week):

What is Ancient Philosophy?, Pierre Hadot
Biographia Literaria, Coleridge
A Grief Observed, Lewis
Surprised by Joy, Lewis
Storm of Steel, Jünger

Philosophy and the Christian, edited by Minich

Course Requirements:

Attentive and sustained participation in class is the primary requirement. Hence no more than one unexplained absence will be tolerated. This also assumes you have done the reading before class and can be called upon at any time to demonstrate you have done so. There will be a final paper for credit-bearing students.

Grading:

There will be a final paper for credit-bearing students. Weekly work for credit-bearing students will consist of asking questions in written form posted to the Davenant Discord server. Your grade will be determined as follows:

Participation (30%)

Weekly written work (30%)

Final paper (40%)

CALENDAR

Course Schedule

Week	Dates	Discussion Topics	Reading
1	Week of 1/10	Ancient	Pierre Hadot <i>What is Ancient Philosophy?</i>
2	Week of 1/17	Christian	Pierre Hadot <i>What is Ancient Philosophy?</i>
3	Week of 1/24	Medieval to Modernity	Pierre Hadot <i>What is Ancient Philosophy?</i>
4	Week of 2/1	The Protestant Position	Escalante & Minich essay: "Philosophy as a way of life" & Also: Selection from John

5	Week of 2/8	Poetry and Philosophy	Coleridge's <i>Biographia Literaria</i> (selections) & <i>Rime of the ancient mariner</i>
6	Week of 2/15	Philosophy and the Man	Coleridge's <i>Biographia Literaria</i> (selections)
7	Week of 2/22	Philosophy and the Battlefield	<i>Storm of Steel</i> by Junger Also Girard, <i>Battling to the end</i>
8	Week of 3/1	Tragedy	C.S. Lewis' <i>A Grief Observed</i> Also Ecclesiastes
9	Week of 3/8	Comedy	C.S. Lewis' <i>Surprised by Joy</i> Also selected Psalms
10	Week of 3/15	Comedy	C.S. Lewis' <i>Surprised by Joy</i> Also selected Psalms