



# God and the Philosophers: The Reconciliation of Faith and Reason

*Thomas V. Morris (Editor)*

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"I am a philosopher because I am a Christian," writes Brian Leftow. "To many intellectuals, this probably sounds like saying that I am a dog because I am a cat." Indeed, prejudice against religious belief runs deep in the academy; in particular, many philosophers hold that faith is incompatible with their profession. But Thomas Morris has met that view head-on by asking a distinguished group of philosophers to write about the union of faith and reason in their lives. *God and the Philosophers* offers a series of highly personal, thoughtful essays by traditionally religious philosophers, revealing the power of belief in their intellectually rigorous lives and work. Figures such as William P. Alston, William J. Wainwright, Marilyn McCord Adams, Peter van Inwagen, and Morris himself, to name a few, speak of their own spiritual journeys, sharing their experiences as philosophically reflective individuals seeking to center themselves on God. We read of conversions from unbelief, struggles with doubts raised by the presence of evil in the world, and changing convictions shaped by constant questioning and communing with God. For example, Brian Leftow describes his acceptance of Christianity after being raised in a secular Jewish home, and Laura Garcia writes about her conversion to Catholicism from her earlier Protestant stance. Along the way, the writers reveal religious philosophy at work - demonstrating, as Arthur F. Holmes writes, "the motivation to intellectual inquiry that Christian faith brings." Here we see how individuals with extraordinary intellectual training discipline and knowledge grapple with personal and existential problems, drawing on their faith as well as their finely honed reason to achieve new understanding. Profoundly honest and deeply thoughtful, these essays reveal how highly educated philosophers - working in halls of dispassionate analysis - come to grips with their faith in a skeptical world. Together they make a profound statement on contem

## God and the Philosophers: The Reconciliation of Faith and Reason Details

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## From Reader Review God and the Philosophers: The Reconciliation of Faith and Reason for online ebook

### Ugh says

A friend lent me this, but unfortunately I have no idea what he thought I might get from it, and whatever it was I didn't get it, so I have no idea what I'm going to say to him next time I see him. I thought it was going to be a bunch of philosophers presenting the reader (believer or not) with their arguments for belief. In fact, it's a bunch of philosophers presenting the reader with stories of how they came to god, and for most of the half-dozen or so chapters that I read philosophy had very little to do with it - the book may just as well have been 'God and the Second-Hand Furniture Salesmen'. My friend specifically recommended two chapters, and one of those (by Peter van Inwagen) *does* try to argue the reader into belief, but the author makes a terrible fist of two of his arguments (humans apparently being oh so different from all other animals, and the current lack of evidence of life elsewhere in the universe), so I was rather baffled as to what my friend was so impressed with. Anyway, as a non-believer, quaint little stories of nice little lives are just that, and hold very little interest for me. Given-upped.

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### Joseph Gascho says

Great read  
between faith and reason there is a lot of room for mystery p 234

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### Judy says

This was a long read with little to take away, except that lots of others have wrestled with experiencing Faith and Science.

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### Bendick Ong says

What has Jerusalem has to do with Athens? Or so some may insisted. Here's a collection of testimonies from the world's best Athenians. Christian philosophers exist (acts 17:34): they are good and strong Christians precisely because they are philosophers! Read how God found these people who married fideistic strength with doxastic fortitude!

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### Austin says

I enjoyed this book quite a bit. I give it three stars for a number of reasons:

First, the book is a compilation of stories from different theistic philosophers. It gets into their background as religious believers as well as their introduction into the world of philosophy. Some of the stories were fascinating and encouraging (Peter Van Inwagen's testimony, and description of the "Dark Night of the Soul"

was especially interesting to me), other ones dull and seemingly pointless. So, like the stories, I this review is mixed.

Second, I expected (hoped) for more actual arguments and reasons for what convinced these believers of the truth of theism. As a Christian and amateur philosopher, I'm always interested to hear what theistic philosophers believe to be the best arguments or reasons for the truth of theism. What I found was more personal accounts and anecdotes. These in themselves are interesting, and worth reading, but the book as a whole was not exactly what I was lead to believe it was.

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### **Bob Breckwoldt says**

A really interesting book that enables th reader to hear the persoanl rather than academic voice of professional philosophers who are are almost all Christians (it does include a couple of Jewish philsofers) giving their personal reasons for belief. The absence of Muslims already gives its editorial aapproach a dated feel. However it engages the reader even if to this reader the reasons given are unconvincing. Well worth checking out.

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### **Jeremiah Whiteman says**

This book has been very helpful to me. As a Christian who has taken up philosophy as a major, this collection of essays by Christian philosophers (except for David Shatz who is an Orthodox Jew) has been a kind of medicine to the anxiety of my soul. Not that I am afraid of pursuing philosophy, but curious about its overall relation to religion. It has also helped make my focus clear on the area of philosophy I think I will pursue. I'd encourage any Christian to read this book in order to see that philosophy and religion are not antithetical to one another, but can help with making sense of one's own beliefs, and an attempt at clarifying difficult questions that involve evil, morality, wishful thinking, et al.

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### **Zak Metz says**

20 stories by 20 philosophers, each interesting and captivating in its own right. I walk away from this book with confidence that Christians have strong, rational reasons for their faith, and that faith can hold its own against prideful worldly wisdom. This is the most inspiring book I've read so far this year.

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### **Nicolas Shump says**

Not as much "reason" as the subtitle suggests. Many of the contributors are academic philosophers and primarily Protestant believers. They do good intellectual biographies, but most cannot seem to articulate how their reason led them to faith. Now, reason does not have to be the primary criteria, but this read more in part like stories of religious conversion from a group of professional philosophers.

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### **Jackie says**

Interesting...

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### **James Bruce says**

It doesn't actually solve the problems but I think the essays are worth considering.

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### **John says**

The best essays in this collection (my favourite is by Peter Van Inwagen) are five-star quality. Some others are really good, and there are a couple make me think editor Tom Morris requested contributions from friends and then couldn't think of a way not to include them. In general, though, this book is brimming with honesty, humour, and the kind of crystallized wisdom that comes as very smart people who reflect on big questions for a living reflect on some of the biggest questions in their own lives and careers.

Kelly Clark's similar book, *Philosophers Who Believe*, should be read as a companion volume. These two books came out within a year of each other and we've never seen anything like them since. Get 'em both, and you'll find much both to bolster and refine your own faith and to encourage faith in your friends and family members. Don't be intimidated: These people write well--this is not a technical volume--and you'll be both educated and encouraged.

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### **Brad Kittle says**

Really enjoyed this book. A book of essays written by philosophers who maintain Christian or Jewish faith.

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### **Victoria Adams says**

I gave this four stars only because I felt a few of the essays could have stepped a bit more out of the professional realm. If one reads the introduction (I always read that stuff), you know that the book was meant to be a collection of thoughts of what it means to be a professional philosopher that also happens to hold a religious faith. I have my favorites, but I learned something from each of them. This is not philosophy for philosophy majors, this is learning what it means to work in a profession that, for some reason, holds a different standard than many other professions. You may be laughed at if you are say, evolutionary biologist and you happen to be Christian. You might get unexpected feedback or a bit of ridicule if you happen to be an astronomer or cosmologist, and you happen to have a religious faith. Somehow when you are a philosopher people think that your thinking just can't be straight because it will always be influenced by your faith. Uh, so what? I think the issue was dealt with rather well in the final essay by George N. Schlesinger; philosophers rarely internalize their thought processes any more than the general public does. We can learn from all points of view and this is no less the case in philosophy than any other field of expertise. Some of our oldest and most revered men and women of thought started thinking because of their belief in something or someone that was greater than all they could see. I have viewed religion as institutionalized philosophy for

years. Many portions of ancient writings that are considered sacred are truly works of profound philosophy. This group of men and women took a moment to explore a personal side of their lives rarely exercised in their classrooms or with their colleagues. It was a different adventure for each and every one of them and I think the result is intriguing.

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### **Andrew Lynch says**

As this book is a collection of 20 essays there is bound to be varying quality and applicability (depending on the reason the reader chose the book). As a Christian, I found the personal testimonies interesting. But the essays which stopped there were not what I was looking for (and that was a majority of them). However, the several essays which expounded beyond historical accounts to a structured discussion of the meshing of Christian faith to current philosophical thought were great (for instance, Peter van Inwagen's chapter). But such discussions were why I chose the book, so it makes sense those would be the one's I enjoyed. So, for a current believer looking for inspirational testimonies, this is probably 5 stars. For a current believer looking for apologetic arguments, I'd say this is 3 stars. For a non-believer searching for a logical argument for faith, this is probably 1 star.

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