

Final exam study questions

PHIL 20810

Exam is on Friday, May 10, from 10:30-12:30, in the usual classroom

On the final exam, you will be given four questions from the following list, and will be asked to answer three:

1. Explain the two minds and kenotic theories of the Incarnation. Which is ultimately more plausible? Why?
2. Explain the 'mad, bad, or God' argument for the claim that Jesus was God. Should the argument convince someone who did not already believe in the divinity of Jesus? Why or why not?
3. Hume claimed that “no testimony is sufficient to establish a miracle, unless the testimony be of such a kind, that its falsehood would be more miraculous, than the fact, which it endeavors to establish.” What does this mean? Why did Hume think that this made belief in miracles on the basis of testimony irrational? Was he right about this?
4. Briefly explain the three main views of the Atonement we discussed in class — the moral exemplar theory, the Christus Victor model, and the penal substitution theory. Which of these is, in your view, most plausible? Why?
5. Explain Sider's argument for the claim that God's justice is inconsistent with standard Christian views of the afterlife. What is the best response for the Christian to make to that argument? Is that response, in the end, successful?
6. Explain the Molinist explanation of the guilt involved in original sin. Is this an adequate account of original sin? Why or why not?
7. We considered various models of life after death, patterned on three different views of the continued existence of human beings over time: materialism, the psychological theory, and dualism. Which view of human beings is most plausible? Why? Do you think that it is consistent with the possibility of life after death?
8. Is it ever rational to believe in God's existence without an argument for that claim? Why or why not?
9. Are there any kinds of disagreement which rationally require the disagreeing agents to suspend belief in the proposition they disagree about? If not, why not? If so, does this pose a problem for the rationality of religious belief?
10. Explain the fine-tuning argument for God's existence. What is the strongest objection to the argument? If the end, should the argument convince an agnostic to believe in God?