

2005-2006 Executive Precepts Program

(Philadelphia, Princeton, New York City, and Washington D.C.)

Sponsored by the James Madison Program in American Ideals and Institutions
Princeton University

Classics in the Philosophy of Religion and Science

Schedule and Reading List

October I. The Sacred and the Profane

Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane* (selections)
Orphic Inscriptions from the Petelia Tablets
Plato, The Allegory of the Cave
Exodus 3:1-7; 3:10-12 (Moses and the Burning Bush)
Mark 1:9-11 (Jesus' baptism)
Acts 22:6-11 (Paul's theophany on the road to Damascus)
St. Augustine, *Confessions*, Book Seven, x, xvii.

November II. Classic Defenses of the Reality of God

St. Thomas Aquinas, The Five Proofs (from the *Summa Theologica*)
St. Anselm, The Ontological Proof
Blaise Pascal, *Pensees* (selections)
Soren Kierkegaard; Truth as Subjectivity (from *Philosophical Fragments*)
Paul Tillich, Faith and Religious Symbols (from *Dynamics of Faith*)
Martin Buber, *The Eclipse of God* (selections)
C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (selections)

December III. God as Harmful Fantasy Projection: 19th and 20th Century Critics of Religion

Auguste Comte, *The Positive Philosophy* (selections)
Ludwig Feuerbach, *The Essence of Christianity* (selections)
Karl Marx, "Critique of Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*" (selections)
Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil* (selections)
Sigmund Freud, *The Future of an Illusion* (selections)

January IV. From Disbelief to Faith

William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (selections)
Leo Tolstoy, *My Confession* (selections)

February V. Truth and Mystical Experience

Evelyn Underhill, *Mysticism* (selections)
Pitirim Sorokin, *Social and Cultural Dynamics* (selections)
Walter Stace, Truth in Mystical Experience (from *Mysticism and Philosophy*)
William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (selections)
Huston Smith, “Do Drugs Have Religious Import”

March VI. Empiricist and Logical Positivist Critics of Religion

David Hume, “On Miracles” (from *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*)
A. J. Ayer, *Language, Truth, and Logic* (selections)
Anthony Flew, “Theology and Falsification”

**April VII. Newtonian Science, Darwinian Science, and the Theory of
Intelligent Design**

Eric Voegelin, “The Origins of Scientism”
Richard Dawkins, *The Blind Watchmaker* (selections)
William Dembski, “Science and Design”
Michael Behe, *Darwin’s Black Box* (selections)
Cardinal Christoph Schoenborn, “Finding Design in Nature”

**May VIII. The Return of the Sacred: Materialism, Scientism, and
Radical Politics Under Assault**

Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (selections)
Whittaker Chambers, “Letter to My Children” (from *Witness*)
Daniel Bell, “The Return of the Sacred?”

June IX. Last Precept

Readings assigned and precept conducted by Professor Robert P. George,
McCormick Professor of Jurisprudence and Director of the James Madison Program
in American Ideals and Institutions