



Christian Philosophy: A Systematic and Narrative Introduction

Craig G. Bartholomew, Michael W. Goheen

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This third book in a series of successful introductory textbooks by Craig Bartholomew and Michael Goheen builds on their previous projects, *The Drama of Scripture* and *Living at the Crossroads*, to offer a comprehensive narrative of philosophical thought from a distinctly Christian perspective.

After exploring the interaction among Scripture, worldview, theology, and philosophy, the authors tell the story of philosophy from ancient Greece through postmodern times, positioning the philosophers in their historical contexts and providing Christian critique along the way. The authors emphasize the Reformed philosophical tradition without neglecting other historical trajectories and show how philosophical thought relates to contemporary life.

Christian Philosophy: A Systematic and Narrative Introduction Details

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From Reader Review Christian Philosophy: A Systematic and Narrative Introduction for online ebook

Matt Manry says

What a great book! This is a must read for anyone interested in Reformed Philosophy.

Check out my review at The Gospel Coalition - [http://legacy.thegospelcoalition.org/...](http://legacy.thegospelcoalition.org/)

Andrew says

I received a free copy from the publisher in a Goodreads First Reads giveaway.

This book covers the history of philosophy from a Christian perspective. I tried reading it straight through over the course of a few months and found it to be a bit overwhelming. Instead I am going to use it as a reference work.

Any serious student of philosophy would get a lot out of it. An average reader like me (college educated but in a completely different field) would probably have a hard time sticking with it all the way through.

Laurent Dv says

Good introduction to philosophy from a neocalvinist view (main idea of philosophy, a survey of the history of philosophy and evaluation of two modern philosophical christian trends : Reformational philosophy (Herman Dooyeweerd, D. H. Vollenhoven) = continental ; Reformed epistemology (Alvin Plantinga, Nicholas Wolterstorff) = analytical.

Scott says

In terms of Christian introductions to philosophy, I think this is the best I've found so far. Most books either try to oversimplify things, whereas more "serious" gateways to understanding philosophy or philosophical movements operate with a certain level of understanding before coming to the text.

By contrast, Bartholomew and Goheen write to a specifically Christian undergraduate / graduate level. They explain every major philosophical movement in the West, define terms where definitions are necessary, and write applicably toward a distinctly Christian outlook on philosophy. With every era or philosopher covered, they will talk about what unique input they had, and how it was problematic for Christian theology.

The last few chapters focused especially on recent trends in Reformational philosophy and the work of philosophers in the analytic tradition like Plantinga and Wolterstorff, as well those in the more Continental tradition, especially Herman Dooyeweerd. While it was good to introduce the reader to these trends, I found it to be a little distracting and the chapter on Dooyeweerd especially long. All things considered, this is still a

very good book.

Many theologically minded students may be strong in their understanding of their Bible, but often are weak when it comes to translating their work into theology. In thinking about actually doing theology, theologians have to reckon with philosophy and philosophical trends. Books like this one will be a spectacular help and I will be recommending this book highly to Christians interested in theology who find themselves weak in philosophy.

Craig says

I have a difficult time with philosophy. This book did a good job of helping me understand some of the basics, though there were parts where I felt it leaned too heavily on "philosophese" (philosophical language that is not part of the average person's language) and so had difficulty understanding the worldviews being presented.

storybridges says

Read this in a couple of sittings. I found it a really helpful overview of the history of philosophical thought from a Christian perspective. Additionally, I think it is a good companion to the other works by this author written with Michael Goheen.

Stephen says

I hope that this book makes its way into the intro to philosophy classes at Christian colleges. Home schooling parents should use it during high school. The authors are Reformed in the Dutch Reformed ("Reformational") philosophical tradition and at times it shows, especially in their frequent critical mentioning of "dualism" in the history of Christian philosophy. As one who has dualism-phobia as well I didn't mind it. In fact, I wish they pointed out clearly the dualisms of Kant and others in modern philosophy. But their restraint made a useful introduction for a broad audience. I highly recommend it.

Jason Brubaker says

Good content but had to push through.

Great overview of major philosophers and movements but dry at times. If you enjoy this subject and looking for introductory info in this area you'll love this book. More than a survey but not exhaustive.

Richard Gunton says

A really helpful overview of the Western tradition of philosophical thought, from the Pre-Socratics to the

21st century. The Christian perspective on this tradition offered by Bartholomew and Goheen will go a long way to helping undergraduates - and others - appreciate the different stories that may be told about the development of Western theoretical thought. For Christian (or sympathetic) thinkers, the final chapters on Reformed Epistemology and Reformational Philosophy will provide an invaluable introduction to schools of thought inspired by Calvinist thought that are, respectively, Analytical and Continental in flavour.

Spencer says

A concise introduction to philosophy itself and also Reformational Christian philosophy. The authors did well at reporting on various philosophers but little in the way of their own work, so to speak. I found their summaries helpful, the language somewhat biased, and their "Reformational philosophy" less helpful. Useful book, though, overall.

Brian Watson says

(Finished 1/3/19.)

This is a very fine introduction to philosophy from a Christian perspective. The intended audience is probably undergraduates at Christian colleges and universities, judging by the device that Bartholomew and Goheen use frequently at either the beginning or end of each chapter, which is an ongoing email dialogue between two Christians, one attending a secular university and another attending a Christian college. (I would prefer if that dialogue were removed from the book.)

The authors are not afraid to evaluate philosophers from the perspective of a Christian worldview, which is refreshing. They align themselves with the Reformational philosophy of Dutch thinkers like Kuyper and Dooyeweerd.

Like any such book, the weakness is that it must do a lot of summarizing, which probably leads to some oversimplifications (though hopefully not distortions) of what various philosophers believed.

Jeff says

This is a narrative introduction to philosophy written from the perspective of a Christian commitment. I have some difficulty when the word 'Christian' is used as an adjective as in the title of this book. This book is not just concerned for philosophy done by Christians although it does include some of that. I think the book must have been written as a text for use at a Christian college or university. Written in three parts; Approaching Christian Philosophy, the Story of Western Philosophy and Christian Philosophy Today, I found the first and last parts very helpful and the middle part, on the whole, rather difficult to get into. For an introductory text, a good portion of the middle part seems a bit obscure.

Josh says

Very interesting and easy to read. I will be returning to this to reference all of the historical aspects and to re-read on Reformational Philosophy. I was already slightly familiar with Reformed Epistemology b/c of Plantinga, but this book added much and encourage me to read even more. Great book.

Clint says

Four stars, only because their treatments of several philosophers were not very helpful. Still a great survey of Western philosophy combined with an excellent section on contemporary Christian philosophy. The summaries of Wolterstorff, Plantinga, and Dooyeweerd are invaluable.

Part of the strength of this book is that both authors come from a Dutch Reformed background. Few, if any, traditions in Christianity interact, critique, and comment as well with culture, science, technology, government, philosophy, etc., than the Neo-Calvinist/Dutch Reformed heritage. It's a shame that so much Evangelicalism really has no clue it's even out there.

Read this book.

Sangita Takhur says

Very interesting book on narrative philosophy.
