

## Metaphysics II: Advanced Studies in the Ontology of Human Persons

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J. P. Moreland, Ph.D.

[www.jpmoreland.com](http://www.jpmoreland.com)

**Purpose:** The purpose of the course is to expose the student to a detailed exploration of the various ways that human persons are currently ontologically analyzed, to compare those analyses to the classic ontology of human persons provided by Aristotle and Aquinas, and to locate the current analyses against the backdrop of the worldview of naturalism and Western theism.

**Objectives:** By the end of the course, the student should be able to:

1. Explain the classic biblical view of the human person and identify the key issues in the current debate between Christian dualists and physicalists.
2. Identity the central metaphysical components of late Aristotelian analyses of living substances in general and human persons in particular.
3. Grasp these views and the crucial arguments for and against them: animalism, material-constitution physicalism, the brain view, the 4D temporal parts position, the bundle theory, substance dualism of different sorts, and nihilism.
4. State how the Ship-of-Theseus puzzle illustrates problems of material constitution, and explain how Aquinas' metaphysical solution to the puzzle compares with important contemporary solutions.
5. Explain the central problem involved in the debate about the nature of chemical change, viz., as accidental or substantial change, and how this problem relates to accepting the classic ontology of Aristotle and Aquinas regarding living substances.
6. Show how five *prima facie* irreducible, uneliminable aspects of human persons can be used as part of a cumulative case argument for the existence of the biblical God.

**Schedule:** The course will meet Monday and Wednesday according to the following schedule:

<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Assignment</i>
8/24	Course Overview	
8/29	Dualism and the Bible	#3, #4, #5
8/31	Organisms in Late Aristotelianism	Des Chene, pp. 1-66
9/7	Organisms in Late Aristotelianism	Des Chene, pp. 67-102, 171-202
9/12	Overview of Olson	Olson, ch. 1
9/14	Animalism	Olson, ch. 2
9/19	Animalism	Olson, ch. 2
9/21	Material Constitution	Olson, ch. 3
9/26	Material Constitution	Olson, ch. 3

9/28	Material Constitution	#6
10/3	Material Constitution	#1
10/5	The Brain View	Olson, ch. 4
10/10	Simplicity and the Brain View	#2
10/12	Split Brains and the Soul	#7
10/17	4D and Temporal Parts	Olson, ch. 5
10/24	4D and Temporal Parts	#8
10/26	4D and Temporal Parts	#8
10/31	The Bundle Theory	Olson, ch. 6
11/2	Souls and Dualism	Olson, ch. 7
11/7	Nihilism	Olson, ch. 8
11/9	Summary of Olson	Olson, ch. 9
11/14	Theseus and Material Constitution	Brown, ch. 1
11/16	Theseus and Contemporary Solutions	Brown, ch. 2
11/21	Aquinas on Material Substance	Brown, ch. 3
11/28	Aquinas on Composition	Brown, ch. 4
11/30	Aquinas, Identity and Individuation	Brown, ch. 5
12/5	Aquinas and Material Constitution	Brown, ch. 6
12/7	Aquinas and Material Constitution	Brown, ch. 7
12/12	Substance and Chemical Change	#9
12/14	Course Summary	

***Textbooks and Additional Readings:***

Christopher M. Brown, *Aquinas and the Ship of Theseus* (London: Continuum, 2005).

Dennis Des Chene, *Life's Form: Late Aristotelian Conceptions of the Soul* (Ithaca, N. Y.: Cornell University Press, 2000).

J. P. Moreland, *The Recalcitrant Imago Dei* (London: SCM Press, 2009).

Eric Olson, *What Are We?* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

**Additional Readings:**

#1: Lynne Rudder Baker, "Christian materialism in a scientific age," *International Journal of Philosophy of Religion* (January 2011): 1-13.

#2: David Barnett, "You are Simple," in Robert C. Koons, George Bealer, eds., *The Waning of Materialism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 161-74.

#3: John Cooper, "The Bible and Dualism Once Again: A Reply to Joel B. Green and Nancey Murphy," *Philosophia Christi* 9 (2007): 459-69.

#4: John Cooper, "The Current Body-Soul Debate: A Case for Holistic Dualism," *Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 13 (2009): 32-50.

#5: John Cooper, "Exaggerated Rumors of Dualism's Demise: A Review Essay on *Body, Soul and Human Life*," in *Philosophia Christi* 11 (2009): 453-64.

- #6: Kevin Corcoran, *Rethinking Human Nature* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker, 2006), pp. 65-82.
- #7: William Hasker, "Persons and the Unity of Consciousness," in Robert C. Koons, George Bealer, eds., *The Waning of Materialism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 175-90.
- #8: Hud Hudson, *A Materialist Metaphysics of the Human Person* (Ithaca, N. Y.: Cornell University Press, 2001), pp. 113-44.
- #9: Ivor Leclerc, "The Problem of the Physical Existent," *International Philosophical Quarterly* 9 (March 1969): 40-62; Terence Nichols, "Aquinas's Concept of Substantial Form and Modern Science," *International Philosophical Quarterly* 36 (September 1996): 303-18.

***Assignments:***

1. A log should be kept of your daily reading which is to be done by the day it is to be discussed. Turn in a final estimate of the total reading you did on time. ***50% of grade due 12/14***
2. Read Moreland in its entirety and turn in a five-page discussion of any topic in the book of interest to you. It is best to select a specific argument or issue and analyze, criticize or defend it. ***20% of grade due 11/28***
3. Turn in a 10-12 page paper (double spaced, 13 font) on any topic of your choice relevant to the class. Try to be technical, focused, precise and clear. ***30% of grade due 12/5***