

# **Skeptics and Believers, *Part I*:** **Religious Debate in the Western Intellectual Tradition**

Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, University of Delaware, Fall 2022

Instructor: James J. Moser

[jamesmoserj@gmail.com](mailto:jamesmoserj@gmail.com) & [jjmoser@udel.edu](mailto:jjmoser@udel.edu)

Prerequisites: None      Materials required: None

---

What are we doing when we profess belief in God? How can we know that God exists? Can reason defend any assertions about God and the world claimed by our religious traditions? Is religion a force for good in human life, or is it something that belongs to a past age, a symptom of the childhood of humanity? The objectives of this course are to stimulate an environment of thoughtful quest and to provide an arena for open, respectful dialogue among participants.

This course will examine the evolving relationships between faith and reason, revelation and evidence, believing and thinking. *Part I* (Fall 2022) will follow the development of “Modernity” through the mid 19<sup>th</sup> Century. *Part II* (Spring 2023) will consider issues from the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century to the present.

Class sessions will include brief presentations by the instructor, viewing a DVD, and hearty discussion. The DVD presentations are from a Great Courses series by Professor Tyler Roberts.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1, Sept. : **NO CLASS**, INSTRUCTOR IS OUT OF THE COUNTRY

Week 2, Sept. : Religion and Modernity

Week 3, Sept. : From Suspicion to the Pre-modern Cosmos

Week 4, Sept. : Scientific Revolution and Descartes

Week 5, Oct. : Descartes and Modern Philosophy

Week 6, Oct. : Enlightenment and Religion

Week 7, Oct. : Natural Religion and Its Critics

Week 8, Oct. : Kant – Religion and Moral Reason

Week 9, Nov. : Schleiermacher – Religion and Experience

Week 10, Nov. : Hegel – Religion, Spirit, and History

Week 11, Nov. : 19<sup>th</sup> Century Modernists & Anti-modernists

Week 12, Nov. : Kierkegaard’s Faith

Week 13, Dec.: Kierkegaard’s Paradox / Course Conclusion

Week 14, Dec. :