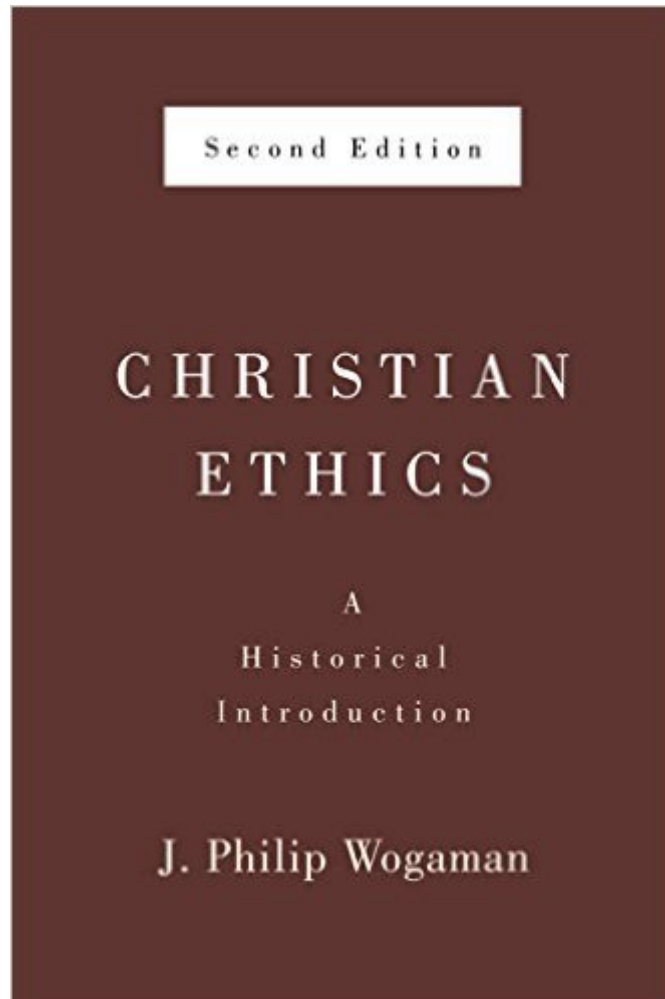


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Christian Ethics, Second Edition: A Historical Introduction



Synopsis

This updated survey of Christian ethics addresses major thinkers, movements, and issues from the early church to the present. A broad range of topics is discussed, including the biblical and philosophical legacies of Christian ethics and ethics through the early, medieval, Reformation, Enlightenment, and modern eras. This new edition contains more extensive discussions of ethics in the twentieth century, including Vatican II, ecumenical social ethics, and Orthodox Christian ethics. A new section, "Toward the Third Millennium," looks at the issues we will face in the coming decades, including medical, scientific, and political dilemmas, and issues of terrorism, war, and peace.

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Customer Reviews

Christian Ethics, A Historical Introduction by J. Philip Wogaman, long-time expert in Christian (primarily Protestant) Christian Ethics, represents one of several different methods for presenting Christian moral thinking. Here, Dr. Wogaman presents a high level summary of Christian moral positions from the influences of the pre-Christian Greek philosophers to the beginning of the 21st century. For those of you who studied "Ethics" in college, there is an ambiguity in the way that word is used. In the secular Academy, "ethics" is "moral philosophy" and is thereby different from "morality". In most Christian thinking, that difference disappears, and the place of "moral philosophy" is taken by the discipline of theology. Dr. Wogaman's book is a general overview of both the interaction of theology with morality as it affected social action. It was not surprising to find 10 pages dedicated to St. Augustine, or 14 pages dedicated to St. Thomas Aquinas or 17 pages devoted to

Luther and Calvin. What impressed me about the book is that it devoted three pages to Jonathan Edwards (1703 - 1758) and his principle work on theological morality, "The Nature of True Virtue". Wogaman gives a nice, 2 page summary of Edwards's argument, but this item is an example of some of the weaknesses of this level of coverage. First, Wogaman makes no mention of how intimately Edwards's moral theology is connected to his sophisticated notion of the Trinity. In this, Edwards's Trinitarian theology and moral thinking is very similar to that of Peter Abelard (1079 - 1142), who also wrote extensively on Christian ethics. It is unfortunate Dr. Wogaman could not find more space for that, and for the affinities between Abelard and Edwards.

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