

from exclusivism?

1: Pre-reading: What is inclusivism?

Karl Rahner (1904-84)

A German Roman Catholic Jesuit who influentially argued for an inclusivist view of Christianity which greatly influenced the Vatican Council (1962-5). He was a

prolific writer.

Rahner's Theology of Grace

Rahner is the twentieth century's pre-eminent theologian of grace. In his view, grace is primarily God's universal self-communication, not the sporadic bestowal of certain divine gifts, and all human beings are the addressees of this communication. 2: Pre-reading: How does this differ Therefore, all truly human activity is a free, positive or negative, response to God's offer of self—the grace at the heart of human existence. Because God offers nothing less than God's very own self to everyone, the human person is, to Rahner's way of thinking, homo mysticus, mystical man. This relationship stamps all personal experiences with at least an implicit, yet primordial, experience of God. Because 'we do have an immediate, preconceptual experience of God through the experience of the limitless breadth of our consciousness', Rahner writes, 'there is such a thing as a mystical component to Christianity'. In fact, he holds the theological position that, ... in every human person ... there is something like an anonymous, unthematic, perhaps repressed, basic experience of being oriented to God ... which can be repressed but not destroyed, which is 'mystical' or (if you prefer a more cautious terminology) has its climax in what the classical masters called infused contemplation. Therefore, all human experiences tend towards 'an intensification which is directed towards something which one could in fact call mystical experience'. In fact, 'mysticism as the experience of grace' grounds not only the ordinary Christian's life of faith, hope and love but also that of anyone living according to his or her conscience. This view of mysticism as the experience of grace permeates not only Rahner's mystical theology but also much of Rahner's overall theology.

Harvey D. Egan, *The Mystical Theology of Karl Rahner*.

Rahner argue everyone knows God? 5: Reflect: In your own words, explain why Rahner is an inclusivist.

BIG Question: What is

religious pluralism and

theology?

4: Retrieval: Why and how does

3: Retrieval: What is Rahner's view on grace?



1: Pre-reading: What is inclusivism?

2: Pre-reading: What is the difference between SI and RI?

3: Retrieval: Why is difference so important to inter-faith dialogue?

David Ford (1948-)

Former Regius Professor of Divinity at Cambridge University until 2014. He is the founding Director of the Cambridge Inter-Faith Programme and one of the two founding members of the Society for Scriptural Reasoning.

David Ford is an Anglican, scholar and inter-faith pioneer. He argues from a structural inclusivist standpoint. He believes that theological inter-faith dialogue works most effectively once the common ground has been established. Differences are a blessing because they make theists think hard about their beliefs; they create an environment of study, discussion, debate and friendship. This is his 'ecology of blessing' – each person comes from their own environment but shares the same world of religion. This 'ecology of blessing' is demonstrated in the story of Abraham (regarded in Judaism, Christianity and Islam as the epitome of faith). Ford believes this biblical covenant (agreement) means all three religions can teach each other. Two key publications illustrate this: Dabru Emet ('Speak the truth'): Published in 2000. A 'Jewish Statement on Christians and Christianity' signed by over 150 rabbis and scholars from the USA, Canada, UK and Israel. It encourages Jews 'to learn about the efforts of Christians to honour Judaism' but also challenges Christians to rethink its teachings, how it reads scripture, the nature and language of its worship, its education and church policies.

A Common Word Between Us and You (A Common Word): Published in 2007 as a letter from 138 Muslim scholars to Christian churches. The title is based on the Qur'an 3:64, the 'common word' being the love of God and neighbour in the quest for peace and justice. A Common Word has generated extensive inter-faith dialogue and shows cooperation and dialogue at an international and institutional level.

Wilkinson, M. and Wilcockson, M, Religious Studies for A Level Year 2 (2017).

BIG Question: How has the Christian Church responded to other faiths? 4: Retrieval: What two publications show considerable evidence of inter-faith dialogue?

5: Reflect: What are the similarities and differences between inclusivist and exclusivist ideas on ifd?



sexuality change?

change?

L: Pre-reading: what are	Foucalt's
views on gender and pow	ver?

Michel Foucault (1926-84)

A French philosopher, historian and social theorist. He argued language, values, systems and thought are governed by the control of power. The article below is from an anonymous student and provides a useful insight into The History of Sexuality Volume 1.

Michel Foucault in *The History of Sexuality Volume 1: An Introduction* explains power and ultimately demonstrates that sexuality is a construct created by discourse. To begin to understand Foucault's argument, we must start by learning why he believed that our widely held theory on sexuality was erroneous. The repressive hypothesis is a prevalent theory that analyzes how our current notions of sexuality developed. This hypothesis assumes that during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance a free and easy attitude prevailed toward sexuality. Then, in the seventeenth century the bourgeoisie repressed sexuality. The repressive hypothesis holds that the bourgeoisie was concerned with economic productivity and did not want energy wasted on sexual pursuits. Therefore, sex outside of procreative purposes was repressed. Consequently, if we want to liberate ourselves, the theory maintains we need to become free and open about our sexuality.

Foucault did not deny that with the rise of the bourgeoisie there was indeed an effort to control sexuality and how people talked about sexuality, but he also pointed out that since the seventeenth century discourse about sexuality has dramatically increased. In fact, discourse on sexuality began to change. Instead of discourse being vulgar or centering on pleasure it turned into a new discourse that centered on science. This insight led Foucault to spend some time examining knowledge and 2: Retrieval: when did attitudes to power. Foucault believed that there is an undeniable power dynamic related to knowledge and that people influencing the knowledge had a great deal of power. Power dynamics for Foucault are not "juridicio-discursive", as the repressive hypothesis assumed. Or stated differently: power is not only 3: Retrieval: how and why did they present in the negative form in which someone in authority restricts behavior with laws. He also briefly discussed a psychoanalytical approach that states we only have desire once we are restricted from the object we crave. Once again, the psychoanalytical approach only regards power as "juridico- discursive" or as a force of repression. Foucault, however, proposed that power in the form of repression and subjugation is only part of the story. Instead of seeing power as only in the hands of people in authority, power exists in all relationships. Foucault emphasized that even the repressed exercise power, and this power shapes concepts. Importantly, Foucault believed power does not always present itself in a negative, repressive way as the juridicio-discursive view holds. Power is, in fact, often creative. Foucault argued that knowledge and power dynamics in relationships have had great influence on sexuality. He concluded that power is not what repressed sexuality but instead that it is ultimately power that has created the construct of sexuality.

Sexuality as a Construct (Foucault) – Queer Bible Hermeneutics (smu.edu)

BIG Question: What role does gender play in society?

4: Retrieval: summarise Foucault's views on power and sexuality?

5: Reflect: what evidence can you think of to support or counter Foucault?



()READING
1: Pre-reading: how do secular
feminists view the Bible?

2: Retrieval: what wicked act does Amnon do to Tamar?

issues around God, the Bible and feminism? **Amnon and Tamar** 13 In the course of time, Amnon son of David fell in love with Tamar, the beautiful sister of Absalom son of David. 4: Retrieval: what happens after ² Amnon became so obsessed with his sister Tamar that he made himself ill. She was a virgin, and it seemed impossible the rape of Tamar? for him to do anything to her. ³ Now Amnon had an adviser named Jonadab son of Shimeah, David's brother. Jonadab was a very shrewd man. ⁴ He asked Amnon, "Why do you, the king's son, look so haggard morning after morning? Won't you tell me?" Amnon said to him, "I'm in love with Tamar, my brother Absalom's sister." ⁵ "Go to bed and pretend to be ill," Jonadab said. "When your father comes to see you, say to him, 'I would like my sister Tamar to come and give me something to eat. Let her prepare the food in my sight so I may watch her and then eat it from her hand."" ⁶ So Amnon lay down and pretended to be ill. When the king came to see him, Amnon said to him, "I would like my sister Tamar to come and make some special bread in my sight, so I may eat from her hand." ⁷ David sent word to Tamar at the palace: "Go to the house of your brother Amnon and prepare some food for him." ⁸ So Tamar went to the house of her brother Amnon, who was lying down. She took some dough, kneaded it, made the bread in his sight and baked it. ⁹ Then she took the pan and served him the bread, but he refused to eat. "Send everyone out of here," Amnon said. So everyone left him. ¹⁰ Then Amnon said to Tamar, "Bring the food here into my bedroom so I may eat from your hand." And Tamar took the bread she had prepared and brought it to her brother Amnon in his bedroom. ¹¹ But when she took it to him to eat, he grabbed her and said, "Come to bed with me, mv sister." ¹² "No, my brother!" she said to him. "Don't force me! Such a thing should not be done in Israel! Don't do this wicked thing. ¹³ What about me? Where could I get rid of my disgrace? And what about you? You would be like one of the 5: Reflect: how might secular wicked fools in Israel. Please speak to the king; he will not keep me from being married to you." ¹⁴ But he refused to feminists respond to 2 Samuel listen to her, and since he was stronger than she, he raped her. 13:1-22? ¹⁵ Then Amnon hated her with intense hatred. In fact, he hated her more than he had loved her. Amnon said to her, "Get up and get out!" ¹⁶ "No!" she said to him. "Sending me away would be a greater wrong than what you have already done to me." But he refused to listen to her. ¹⁷ He called his personal servant and said, "Get this woman out of my sight and bolt the door after her." ¹⁸ So his servant put her out and bolted the door after her. She was wearing an ornate^[a] robe, for this was the kind of garment the virgin daughters of the king wore. ¹⁹ Tamar put ashes on her head and tore the ornate robe she was wearing. She put her hands on her head and went away, weeping aloud as she went. ²⁰ Her brother Absalom said to her, "Has that Amnon, your brother, been with you? Be quiet for now, my sister; he is your brother. Don't take this thing to heart." And Tamar lived in her brother Absalom's house, a desolate woman. ²¹ When King David heard all this, he was furious. ²² And Absalom never said a word to Amnon, either good or bad; he hated Amnon because he had disgraced his sister Tamar. 2 Samuel 13:1-22

BIG Question: What are the



1: Pre-reading: how might a Catholic feminist view the Bible? **Rosemary Radford Ruether** (1936-2022): Born in Minnesota, USA. After graduating she became a member of the civil rights movement in the 1960s. In 1983 she helped to found the Women-Church and has written many influential books, including *Sexism and God-Talk: Towards a Feminist Theology* (1983), and *Goddesses and the Divine Feminine: A Western Religious History* (2005).

Ruether was for thirty years been considered a pioneer in the area of feminist theology in North America, with a particular focus in modern feminist theology and liberation theology, especially in Palestine and Latin America. She has also been an outspoken critic of war since the Vietnam era and continues this work today.

Viewpoints

Ruether describes herself as an "ecofeminist" and has referred to God in the feminine as "Gaia" (however, she noted in July 2008 that a critic "accused me of teaching that 'God is Gaia,' a view which I do not take").

Ruether is an advocate of women's ordination. In 1984 she was one of 97 theologians and religious persons who signed *A Catholic Statement on Pluralism and Abortion* calling for religious pluralism and discussion within the Catholic Church regarding the Church's position on abortion. Since 1985 Ruether has served as a board member for the pro-choice group "Catholics for Choice (CFC).

2: Retrieval: what causes has Ruether supported in her life?

In 2005 Ruether explained to an audience at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles her view that "Christianity is riddled by hierarchy and patriarchy". This created a social order in which chaste women on their wedding night were "in effect, raped by young husbands whose previous sexual experience came from exploitative relationships with servant women and prostitutes. . . . Modern societies have sought to change this situation, allowing women education, legal autonomy, paid employment and personal freedom. But the sexual morality of traditional puritanical patriarchal Christianity has never been adequately rethought." She is a signatory to the 2004 9/11 Truth Statement which called for a "Deeper Investigation into the Events of 9/11".

Her experiences helped her realise that theology must emerge from oppression and the 'underside of history'.

As a white middle-class woman, Ruether came to see that a theology which stems from the historical and material conditions of millions of marginalised people challenged her own preconceptions of God and what she calls the 'redemptive transformation of creation.' Her theological aim is to transform all human relationships with each other and with nature.

and how did she arrive there? 4: Reflect: what criticisms do you think are aimed at Ruether and why?

BIG Question: What are the

issues around God, the Bible

and feminism?

3: Retrieval: what is her theology

READING	Mary Daly (October 16, 1928 – January 3, 2010) was an American radical feminist philosopher, academic, and theologian. Daly, who described herself as a "radical lesbian feminist", taught at Boston College, a Jesuit-run institution, for 33 years. Daly retired in 1999, after violating university policy by refusing to allow male students in her advanced women's studies classes.	BIG Question: What are the issues around God, the Bible and feminism?
1: Pre-reading: how do secular	She allowed male students in her introductory class and privately tutored those who wanted to take advanced classes.	3: Retrieval: what is the main argument of Gyn/Ecology?
Teminists view the Bible?	 Education Before obtaining her two doctorates in sacred theology and philosophy from the University of Fribourg, Switzerland, she received her B.A. in English from The College of Saint Rose, her M.A. in English from The Catholic University of America, and a doctorate in religion from Saint Mary's College. Daly taught classes at Boston College from 1967 to 1999, including courses in theology, feminist ethics, and patriarchy. Controversy Daly was first threatened with dismissal when, following the publication of her first book, <i>The Church and the Second Sex</i> (1968), she was issued a terminal contract. As a result of support from the (then all-male) student body and the general public, however, Daly was ultimately granted tenure. Daly's refusal to admit male students to some of her classes at Boston College also resulted in disciplinary action. While Daly argued that their presence inhibited class discussion, Boston College took the view that her actions were in violation of federal law requiring the College to ensure that no person was excluded from an education program on the basis of sex, and of the University's own non-discrimination policy insisting that all courses be open to both male and female students. Works Daly published a number of works, and is perhaps best known for her second book, <i>Beyond God the Father</i> (1973). <i>Beyond God the Father</i> is the last book in which Daly really considers God a substantive subject. She laid out her systematic theology, <i>Beyond God the Father</i> is her attempt to explain and overcome androcentrism in Western religion, and it is notable for its playful writing style and its attempt to rehabilitate "God-talk" for the women's liberation movement by critically building on the writing of existentialist theologians such as Paul Tillich's example. In <i>Gyn/Ecology: The Metaethics of Radical Feminism</i> (1978), Daly argues that men throughout history have sought to oppress women. In this book she moves beyond he	Image: Intent of Gyny Leology: Image: Intent of Gyny Leology:
	on the history of patriarchy to the focus on the actual practices that, in her view, perpetuate patriarchy, which she calls a religion.	



1: Retrieval: What is Daly's dualistic thought-praxis?

Daly's Pure Lust: Elemental Feminist Philosophy (1984) and Webster's First New Intergalactic Wickedary of the English Language (1987) introduce and explore an alternative language to explain the process of exorcism and ecstasy. In *Wickedary* Daly provides definitions as well as chants that she says can be used by women to free themselves from patriarchal oppression. She also explores the labels that she says patriarchal society places on women to prolong what she sees as male domination of society. Daly's work continues to influence feminism and feminist theology. Daly created her own theological anthropology based around the context of what it means to be a woman. She created a dualistic thought-praxis that separates the world into the world of false images that create oppression and the world of communion in true being. She labelled these two areas Foreground and Background respectively. Daly considered the Foreground the realm of patriarchy and the Background the realm of Woman. She argued that the Background is under and behind the surface of the false reality of the Foreground. The Foreground, for Daly, was a distortion of true being, the paternalistic society in which she said most people live. It has no real energy, but drains the "life energy" of women residing in the Background. In her view, the Foreground creates a world of poisons that contaminate natural life. She called the male-centered world of the Foreground necrophilic, hating all living things. In contrast, she conceived of the Background as a place where all living things connect. Views on men: She argued against sexual equality, believing that women ought to govern men; Daly advocated a reversal of socio-political power between the sexes. In an interview with *What is Enlightenment?* magazine, Daly said, "I don't think about men. I really don't care about them. I'm concerned with *women's* capacities, which have been infinitely diminished under patriarchy. Not that they've disappeared, but they've been made subliminal.

I'm concerned with *women* enlarging our capacities, actualizing them. So that takes all my energy."

Later in the interview, she said, "If life is to survive on this planet, there must be a decontamination of the Earth. I think this will be accompanied by an evolutionary process that will result in a drastic reduction of the population of males."

Views on transsexualism:

In Gyn/Ecology, Daly asserted her negative view of transsexualism, writing, "Today the Frankenstein phenomenon is omnipresent . . . in . . . phallocratic technology. . . . Transsexualism is an example of male surgical siring which invades the female world with substitutes." "Transsexualism, which Janice Raymond has shown to be essentially a male problem, is an *attempt* to change males into females, whereas in fact no male can assume female chromosomes and life history/experience." "The surgeons and hormone therapists of the transsexual kingdom . . . can be said to produce feminine persons. They cannot produce women." https://liberationtheology.org/people-organizations/mary-daly/

BIG Question: What are the		
issues around God, the Bible		
and feminism?		
2: Retrieval: what are Daly's views		
on men?		
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3: Reflect: how might the LGBTQ+		
community respond to her views		
on transsexualism?		
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READING	Karl Marx (1818-1893): Alienation and exploitation Marx believed that societies rarely managed long periods of stability. With historical	BIG Question: How does theology respond to
1: Pre-reading: what do you understand by the following words: Alienation:	materialism he theorized that processes work towards harmony only to collapse in conflict. The process then begins again. Since the first disputes over ownership and land (the first means of production) many factors have led to competition and alienation – the degrading of the person into a thing or an object, rather than a purposeful individual.	Marxism? 3: Retrieval: what were Mars's views on exploitation?
Exploitation:	Karl Marx believed that exploitation was something embedded structurally in the entire capitalist system. It didn't matter if your boss was a kindly philanthropist or a rapacious miser – the way in which capitalism works means that exploitation is essential.	
	So what did Marx mean by exploitation? In Marx's view, all societies in history had involved differing types of exploitation. The	5: Research: find two quotes by
• Capitalism: 	slave societies of ancient Rome saw human beings physically owned by their masters who would allow them to put a little aside for their own subsistence and to eventually buy their freedom (manumission). Slavery gave way to feudalism where serfs in the medieval period used their "labour power" to both work for themselves and for the local lord. Feudalism was then succeeded by capitalism, which created the illusion of freedom for the working class. But in reality, every worker is obliged to sell their "labour power" to a capitalist.	Marx that help you to explore alienation and exploitation further.
2: Retrieval: what is historical materialism?	Capitalism and the illusion of freedom Because the working class doesn't own the means of production, distribution and exchange (the economy in other words), it has to hire itself out to the capitalists. They in turn cannot pay the full, real value of a worker's labour because they need to squeeze a profit out of the deal. So, for part of the working day – a worker's labour pays for their wages. For the	
·	remaining part, they are creating surplus value – which goes straight to the capitalist.	·

READING	Oscar Romero (1917-80) Oscar Romero was the Archbishop of San Salvador from 1977 until he was assassinated in 1980. He was initially regarded as a conservative choice as archbishop, but he became increasingly outspoken about human rights violations in El Salvador – particularly after the murder of his close	BIG Question: How does theology respond to Marxism?
1: Pre-reading: What do you know about poverty and inequality in South America?	friend Father Rutilio Grande in March 1977. During his three years as archbishop, Romero repeatedly denounced violence and spoke out on behalf of the victims of the civil war. In a time of heavy press censorship, his weekly radio broadcasts were often the only way people could find out the truth about the atrocities that were	3: Retrieval: What role did Romero have from 1977?
	happening in their country. He defended the right of the poor to demand political change, a stance	•
	which made him a troublesome adversary for the country's rulers. A month before he was assassinated, Romero wrote to President Jimmy Carter urging the US to stop backing the Salvadoran government and supplying it with arms and military advisers. And on the day before his assassination, he urged soldiers and police not to follow orders to kill civilians,	4: Retrieval: Who murdered him and why?
	and stop the repression: "The peasants you kill are your own brothers and sisters," he preached. "When you hear a man	
	telling you to kill, remember God's words, 'Thou shalt not kill'. In the name of God, and in the name of this suffering people, whose laments rise to heaven each day more tumultuous, I beg you, I beseech you, I order you in the name of God: stop the repression!"	
•	Archbishop Romero was shot dead on 24 March 1980, aged 62, while celebrating Mass. In the ensuing decade, some 70,000 Salvadorans were killed in the civil war.	5: Retrieval and reflection: Why should Romero be remembered?
2: Pre-reading: What is a civil war and what challenges does it bring?	Why is he an important figure to commemorate? Archbishop Romero was one of the most remarkable figures of the 20 th century, who deserves to be commemorated alongside the likes of Martin Luther King and Mahatma Gandhi as a	
	peacemaker who sacrificed his life standing up to injustice. The world today desperately needs more figures like Romero – leaders with the courage, faith and love to stand up for the poor against injustice.	
	Romero is, in particular, an inspirational figure to hundreds of millions of Catholics around the world. He didn't simply talk about the need to love your neighbour, but courageously named the	
	injustices that plagued his country. He reminded us that Christ is found in people living in poverty, and that we cannot ignore the suffering of our brothers and sisters in need.	
	We can all celebrate Romero's legacy by following his example: by challenging injustice wherever we see it and by refusing to stay silent about the issues that keep people in poverty. For example,	
•	the climate crisis is the single biggest threat to reducing poverty in the world today, which is why we campaign on the issue.	