



A ROMAN ROADS MEDIA Video Course

Old Western Culture

*A Christian Approach to the Great Books*

THE GREEKS

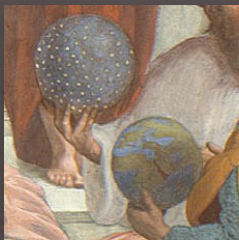
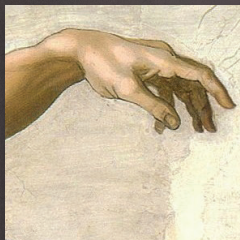
# THE PHILOSOPHERS

*The Works of Plato and Aristotle*



Wesley Callihan

Guide to the Art



## ABOUT ROMAN ROADS MEDIA



ROMAN  
ROADS  
MEDIA

Roman Roads Media combines its technical expertise with the experience of established authorities in the field of classical education to create quality video resources tailored to the homeschooler. Just as the first century roads of the Roman Empire were the physical means by which the early church spread the gospel far and wide, so Roman Roads Media uses today's technology to bring timeless truth, goodness, and beauty into your home. By combining clear instruction with visual aids and examples, we help inspire in your children a lifelong love of learning. As homeschool graduates themselves, our producers know the value of excellent educational tools, and strive to ensure that Roman Roads' materials are of the highest caliber.

## ABOUT OLD WESTERN CULTURE

*Old Western Culture: A Christian Approach to the Great Books* is an integrated humanities course designed to give students an overview of Western culture by studying the great books from a Christian perspective. The video series consists of four courses, designed to be completed over four years:

Year 1: The Greeks

Year 2: The Romans

Year 3: Christendom

Year 4: The Moderns



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## Introduction and Overview

### How to Use This Course

*Old Western Culture: A Christian Approach to the Great Books* is a four-year course of study designed for grades 9–12. Each year of *Old Western Culture* is a double-credit literature and social studies course. The four units that make up each year may also be used individually as one-quarter electives.

#### MATERIALS

- **DVD Lessons.** Instructor Wes Callihan's deep knowledge of the classics and decades of teaching experience are a rich resource for homeschool families.
- **The Great Books.** *Old Western Culture* immerses students in reading the classics themselves rather than just reading about them. Families have several options for acquiring the texts:
  1. Purchase the recommended translations. Visit the *Old Western Culture: The Greeks* page at [www.romanroadsmedia.com](http://www.romanroadsmedia.com), and click on the "Books" tab for Amazon links. We highly encourage purchasing the recommended translations for this unit of *Old Western Culture* — *The Landmark Herodotus* and *The Landmark Thucydides* — as they contain valuable maps, timelines, charts, and summaries.
  2. Use copies you already own, even if they're not the recommended translations. Mr. Callihan frequently emphasizes the benefit of referencing multiple translations.
  3. Download ebook versions of the original source texts at [romanroadsmedia.com/materials](http://romanroadsmedia.com/materials). These digital text versions are not the recommended translations, but they are satisfactory.
- **The Student Workbook.** Purchase a hard copy or download a free PDF at [romanroadsmedia.com/materials](http://romanroadsmedia.com/materials). The workbook questions allow students to test their understanding of the reading assignments and the lectures. If you can't remember the answer to a video lecture question, visit the section of the DVD menu labeled "Study Question Links," which hyperlinks each video question to the relevant chapter of the lecture where the question is addressed.
- **Guide to the Art.** This publication extends the curriculum into an exploration of ancient art and more recent artistic responses to the literature.
- **Additional Resources.** Visit [romanroadsmedia.com/materials](http://romanroadsmedia.com/materials) for an up-to-date list of additional resources.

## RECOMMENDED SCHEDULE

*Old Western Culture* is designed to accommodate a traditional nine week-term (for a thirty-six-week school year). A recommended schedule is provided below. We expect the average student to spend one to three hours per day on this course: first completing the assigned readings and answering the workbook questions related to the reading, and then watching the lectures and answering the video questions.

## ADDITIONAL ASSIGNMENTS

In addition to the reading, lectures, and workbook questions, students will complete the following:

- **Term Paper.** The lists of discussion topics at the end of each lesson in the student workbook is a good place to look for paper topics. Students should also feel free to come up with their own original topics as long as they are based on the term's lectures or reading. We recommend a paper length of 750–1,200 words.
- **Final Exam.** Visit [www.romanroadsmedia.com/materials](http://www.romanroadsmedia.com/materials) to download the most recent final exams. Two options, Exam A and Exam B, are provided. The exams are similar in style and difficulty, but the content varies. Students who score lower than 90 percent on Exam A should take Exam B two days later to help reinforce subject mastery.

## AGE LEVEL

In *Old Western Culture* students will encounter mature themes such as paganism, sexual immorality, detailed battle descriptions (mostly in actual reading), and nudity in classical painting and sculpture. We recommend the series for ages fourteen and above, but of course parents will want to consider the maturity levels of their children and decide whether *Old Western Culture* will be appropriate.

## A NOTE ABOUT SPELLING

Most of the painting titles in this booklet reference names transliterated from Latin, while the student workbook uses transliterations based on the Greek spellings. Both variations are acceptable and students are free to use whichever they prefer.



## RECOMMENDED NINE-WEEK SCHEDULE

Color Key: Watch Lectures Answer Workbook Questions Read Texts Complete Additional Assignments

WEEK	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
1	Lecture 1 Lecture Questions	<i>Apology</i>	Reading Questions	Lecture 2 Lecture Questions	<i>Crito</i>
2	<i>Phaedo</i>	Reading Questions	Lecture 3 Lecture Questions	<i>Phaedrus</i>	Reading Questions
3	Lecture 4 Lecture Questions	<i>The Republic, Books 1 &amp; 2</i>	Reading Questions	Lecture 5 Lecture Questions	<i>The Republic, Books 7 &amp; 8</i>
4	<i>The Republic, Book 9</i>	<i>The Republic, Book 10</i>	Reading Questions	Lecture 6 Lecture Questions	<i>Metaphysics, Book 1, Chapters 1–3</i>
5	Reading Questions	Lecture 7 Lecture Questions	<i>Metaphysics, Book 12</i>	Reading Questions	Lecture 8 Lecture Questions
6	<i>Ethics, Book 1</i>	Reading Questions	Lecture 9 Lecture Questions Paper: Thesis Statement Due	<i>Ethics, Book 2</i>	<i>Ethics, Book 3</i>
7	<i>Ethics, Book 4</i>	Reading Questions	Lecture 10 Lecture Questions	<i>Poetics</i>	Reading Questions
8	Lecture 11 Lecture Questions	Lecture 12 Lecture Questions			Paper: Draft Due
9	Exam A		Exam B ( <i>if score on Exam A is below 90%</i> )		Paper: Final Due

\* Assignment differs from those given on DVD. Follow this schedule.





## Lesson 1

# Overview of Greek Philosophy



### *The Death of Socrates*

Jacques-Louis David, AD 1787, oil on canvas, 129.5 x 196.2 cm.

*The Death of Socrates* is one of French painter David's most famous works. It draws from the closing pages of *Phaedo*, in which Socrates is condemned for corrupting the youth of the city and for "not believing in the gods of the state." Although he could escape and go away to live in exile, Socrates accepts his sentence—execution by drinking hemlock—because he believes that no true philosopher should fear death. In the painting, Socrates reaches for the deadly cup (at dead center), and his calm demeanor is contrasted with the dramatic grief displayed by the men around him. Only Plato, seated at the foot of the bed, shares any degree of his serenity. They are both dressed in icy blue, while the other figures are clothed in warmer, bolder tones that fit their anguished expressions.



## Lesson 2

### Plato: *Apology*



#### *The Death of Socrates*

Jean-François-Pierre Peyron, AD 1787, oil on canvas, 99 x 135.9 cm.

Another French artist, Jean-François-Pierre Peyron (1744–1814), completed a painting of Socrates' death the same year as David's, and both were entered in the Salon exhibition at the Louvre. The two were rivals, and it is likely that David deliberately chose the subject in order to upstage Peyron. Indeed, his version eclipsed Peyron's. Both of their depictions of the tragic scene employ a relief-like composition—the back wall is parallel to the surface of the painting and the figures are positioned as if carved from the background—but Peyron's painting is weaker and less focused. A few years earlier it was Peyron who had beat out David for a prestigious scholarship, the Prix de Rome. David, having entered the several years running, despaired over the loss to Peyron, but won the competition the following year. At Peyron's funeral, David eulogized his former rival, saying, "He had opened my eyes."



## Lesson 3

### Plato: *Crito* and *Phaedo*



*St. Thomas Aquinas*,  
detail from the  
Demidoff Altarpiece  
Carlo Crivelli, AD  
1476, tempera on  
wood, 61 x 40 cm.

Originally created for the high altar of the church of San Domenico at Ascoli Piceno in Italy, Crivelli's many-panelled (polyptych) work was later owned by Prince Anatole Demidoff, a Russian count and diplomat, and it is now known by his name. Comprising two tiers of paintings of saints in an ornately carved frame, the altar was created in the distinctive complex style for which Crivelli is known. Despite the growing popularity of oil paints in the mid-fifteenth

century, Crivelli exclusively worked in tempera. He also eschewed the emerging naturalistic trends of the day in favor of a more formal, conservative late Gothic style, which was probably the preference of his ecclesiastical patrons.

In sharp contrast to the Gnostic view of the soul presented in *Phaedo*, Thomas Aquinas and other scholastic theologians advanced a robust defense of the Christian hope in the resurrection of the body—a doctrine that has come under attack time and again in the course of church history.





## Lesson 4

### Plato: *Phaedrus*



#### *Dante and Beatrice*

Henry Holiday, AD 1884, oil on canvas, 142.2 x 203.2 cm.

Henry Holiday (1839–1927), known as “the last Pre-Raphaelite,” may have picked up his interest in Dante from the school’s founder, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, whose work often depicted his namesake. This painting depicts an episode from the poet’s autobiography: Dante had concealed his love for Beatrice by feigning interest in other women. Beatrice caught wind of his behavior, and is here seen giving him the cold shoulder. Her friend Monna, shown with a protective hand on Beatrice’s shoulder, casts a punishing glance at Dante. Holiday’s eye for historical accuracy is evident in details such as the brick pavement and the scaffolding on the Ponte Vecchio (the bridge in the background), which was being restored at the time the scene depicts. Although Dante never pursued a romantic relationship with Beatrice, who died in her twenties, she shows up in Dante’s great work, *The Divine Comedy*, at the end of the *Purgatorio*, where she functions as a mirror of divine beauty and grace. In a thematic parallel to Plato’s *Phaedrus*, Dante realizes that his passion and desire for Beatrice is a shadowy reflection that teaches him something of his desire for the eternal.



## Lesson 5

### Plato: *The Republic* I



#### *Outside the Hall of the Gibichungs*

Josef Hoffmann, AD 1876, oil sketch, 20.8 x 26 cm.

Austrian Josef Hoffmann (1834–1904) was the set designer for the 1876 premiere staging of Richard Wagner's *Götterdämmerung* (*Twilight of the Gods*), the fourth opera in the *Ring Cycle*. The epic series, loosely based on the same Norse sagas that inspired J. R. R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*. Both the Norse sagas and Tolkien's trilogy harken back to the ancient story of Gygyes' ring of invisibility in Herodotus, a tale that is repeated in Plato's *Republic* to illustrate the nature of human morality when the fear of consequences are removed.





## Lesson 6

### Plato: *The Republic II*



#### *Plato's Cave*

Michiel Coxie, sixteenth century AD

Dubbed the “Flemish Raphael,” Michiel Coxie (1499–1592) studied first in Belgium under Bernard van Orley, and then in Rome, where he was a member of Michelangelo’s inner circle. These influences gave his work a unique blend of Flemish and Italian styles. Later Coxie went on to become the court painter of Regent Maria of Austria. This painting depicts Plato’s Allegory of the Cave: A group of men have spent their whole lives chained up in a cave, observing only the shadows of events as cast on an opposite blank wall. The prisoners represent most men, who see only shadows of reality in the mutable material world, while philosophers are men who have escaped their chains and can fully perceive reality in knowledge of the forms.



***The School of Athens (detail)***  
**Raffaello Sanzio da Urbino**

*(See full painting on back cover.)* Better known to us by his Anglicized name, Raphael (1483–1520) was one of the greatest Italian painters and architects of the High Renaissance. Though died at just 37, he left an enormous body of work, much of which is housed at the Vatican. *The School of Athens*, originally titled *Seek Knowledge of Causes*, fills a wall in one of the Raphael Rooms,

which form the public reception area of the palace. Representing philosophy, it is one of four frescoes illustrating areas of human knowledge. On the other three walls theology, law, and poetry (including music) are depicted. The central figures in the painting, Plato and Aristotle (shown in this detail), are surrounded by noted thinkers, mostly Greek, including Socrates, Pythagoras, Euclid, Ptolemy, Zoroaster, and Diogenes. Raphael is believed to have painted himself into the mural, but there is some debate over which figure is him. And he honored Leonardo da Vinci by using his likeness for the figure of Plato, whose hand points upward towards the eternal Forms. Aristotle, on the right, extends his hand towards the earth, the material world where he believed ultimate reality could be studied. Despite various attempts to identify all of the philosophers depicted, only a few can be named with any certainty.



## Lesson 7

### Aristotle: *Metaphysics* I



#### *A Calm at a Mediterranean Port*

Claude-Joseph Vernet, AD 1770, oil on canvas, 113 x 145.7 cm.

French artist Claude-Joseph Vernet (1689–1753) specialized in paintings of the sea. The word *serene* sums up this image of a gentle sunset on a placid sea. The figures on the pier are engaging in humdrum labors, smoking a pipe, or enjoying a leisurely conversation. One woman, dressed in the same golden and rosy hues that garb the sky, is gesturing toward a ship, perhaps a merchant vessel representing prosperity. The peacefulness of the scene stands in contrast to a companion painting by Vernet, *A Storm on a Mediterranean Coast*, which depicts a storm-driven sea and a shipwrecked boat. Vernet's goal was simply to create beautiful artwork. With a blend of humility and pride, he said, "Others may know better how to paint the sky, the earth, the ocean; no one knows better than I how to paint a picture." In the *Metaphysics*, Aristotle uses the concept of "beauty for its own sake" to argue that the delight we take in our senses apart from their usefulness is an indication of his first premise that "all men by nature desire to know."



## Lesson 8

### Aristotle: *Metaphysics II*



#### *Adoration of the Shepherds*

Charles Le Brun, AD 1689, oil on canvas, 151 x 213 cm.

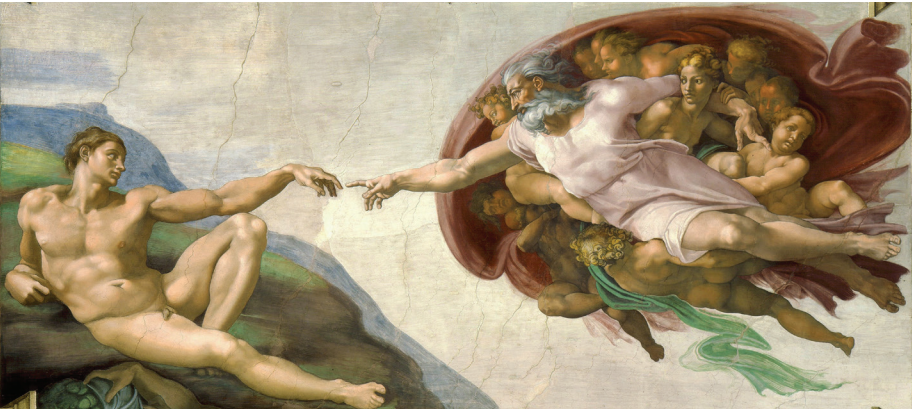
French painter Charles Le Brun (1619–90) worked with the French Minister of Finances Jean-Baptiste Colbert to co-found the Gobelins, a manufacturer of royal furnishings that made French luxury goods the standard for Europe. The work produced under their direction there became known as Louis XIV Style. Le Brun was also an art theorist who wrote a treatise on emotional expression in painting and was so celebrated that King Louis XIV named him First Painter to His Majesty and dubbed him “the greatest French artist of all time.” His skill with composition, color, and light is evident here in this depiction of the nativity, which immediately draws our focus to the mother and Child, illuminated by a fire. All of the other figures have been drawn to Him, too, and heaven and earth meet here as the angelic host join in honoring the incarnate Christ. Medieval Christianity built upon the basic framework of Aristotelian cosmology, but saw the incarnation as the focal point in the union of heaven and earth.





## Lesson 10

### Aristotle: *Ethics* II



#### *The Creation of Adam*

Michelangelo di Lodovico Buonarroti Simoni, c. AD 1511–12, fresco, 570 x 280 cm.

Along with Leonardo's *Mona Lisa* and *Last Supper* Michelangelo's (1475–1564) *Creation of Adam* is one of the most well-known, most reproduced, and most frequently parodied paintings in the world. The image is one of numerous panels on the sixty-five-foot-high vaulted ceiling of the Vatican's Sistine Chapel depicting scenes from Genesis. Here the figure of God, on the right, carried by heavenly beings, reaches out to give life to the first man. Born to a family of bankers, Michelangelo was sent to study grammar in Florence, but it was soon clear that he was not destined to a life of books or bookkeeping. He was drawn instead to the artists of the then-budding Renaissance, and would soon be one of the greatest contributors to its full flowering.

Based on Aristotle's treatment of friendship in *Ethics*, the concept of man being "friends with God" was not possible. In scripture, however, we learn that man can be "friends with God" because of the perfect work of Christ.



### *Jacob's Dream*

Salvator Rosa, c. AD 1665, oil on canvas

Though he was active during the seventeenth-century Baroque period, the work of Salvator Rosa (1615–73) might as easily belong to the heyday of Romanticism in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, when his work reached the peak of its popularity. His paintings depict nature at its wildest and most dramatic. In this painting rocky crags and windswept trees create a dramatic setting for Jacob's nighttime vision of angels ascending and descending on a ladder that reached into heaven. Rosa's untamed style led one art historian to call him a "perpetual rebel," a reputation bolstered by the allegation that he spent time with a gang of bandits, sketching the countryside as he roamed with them. Though his father, a land surveyor who had trained as an architect, sent him to study for the priesthood, it was clear that his calling was art, and he secretly pursued art instruction from an uncle. When he was seventeen, his father died, and the prodigal Salvator sold his paintings in the street to support his mother and younger siblings. His work attracted the attention of other artists, who helped to further his training and career. If Salvator's adventuresome biography appeals more to the guys, perhaps this will appeal to the girls: *Jacob's Dream* now graces a wall at Chatsworth House, which was used as Pemberley in the 2005 film version of *Pride and Prejudice*.





## Lesson 11

### Aristotle: *Poetics*



#### *La Naumaquia (Naumachia)*

Ulpiano Checa, c. AD 1894, oil on canvas, 125.6 x 200.5 cm.

Julius Caesar took gladiatorial combat to a new level in 46 BC when he had a basin dug near the Tiber and forced 6,000 prisoners of war to engage in a naval battle as a spectator sport. The word *naumachia* refers both the combat itself and to the setting where it is held. Julius for the bloody entertainment. Augustus did similarly in 2 BC. Claudius held a *naumachia* on Fucine Lake in central Italy in 52 AD, and Nero was the first to hold a *naumachia* in an amphitheater. Since the Roman era, some tamer mock sea battles have been staged with model ships. This depiction of a *naumachia* was painted by Spanish artist Ulpiano Checa (1860–1916), whose work was used by Hollywood studios as a reference for historical staging. Films such as *Ben-Hur* look as if they might have come out of one of his paintings.

In the *Poetics*, Aristotle says that one of the great benefits of art (painting, theater, or other medium) is that it allows us to experience representations of reality with a degree of dispassionate distance. This enables us to learn something about an experience without the immediate demands that actually seeing the same thing would place upon us ("Somebody's hurt! Call 911!"). This is why Mr. Callihan calls good stories "emotional boot camp for life."



## Comprehensive List of Artwork in *The Greeks: The Histories*

Delve deeper into art history by exploring more of the works used to illustrate the lectures in *Old Western Culture*. The list below reflects the sequence in which the images are presented in the lessons.

### Lecture 1: Overview of Greek Philosophy

*The Death of Socrates*, Jacques-Louis David, AD 1787

*Aristotle Tutoring Alexander the Great*, illustration, publication and date unknown

*The Israelites Leaving Egypt*, David Roberts, AD 1830

### Lecture 2: Plato: *Apology*

*Priestess of Delphi*, John Collier, AD 1891

*The Death of Socrates*, Jean Francois Pierre Peyron, AD 1787

### Lecture 3: Plato: *Crito* and *Phaedo*

*Nun Raises the Sun, Book of the Dead*, 1050 BC

*Thomas Aquinas*, Carlo Crivelli, AD 1476

### Lecture 4: Plato: *Phaedrus*

*Dante and Beatrice*, Henry Holiday, AD 1882-1884

### Lecture 5: Plato: *The Republic I*

*The Ring of Gyges*, Ferrarese School, sixteenth century AD

*Outside the Hall of the Gibichungs*, Josef Hoffmann, AD 1876

### Lecture 6: Plato: *The Republic II*

*Plato's Allegory of the Cave*, Jan Saenredam, AD 1604

*School of Athens*, Raphael, AD c. 1509-1511

*Plato's Cave*, Michiel Coxcie, sixteenth century AD

### Lecture 7: Aristotle: *Metaphysics I*

*A Calm at a Mediterranean Port*, Claude-Joseph Vernet, AD 1770

*Figure of the Heavenly Bodies*, Bartolomeu Velho, AD 1568

*School of Athens*, Raphael, c. AD 1509-1511

## **Lecture 8: Aristotle: *Metaphysics* II**

*Figure of the Heavenly Bodies*, Bartolomeu Velho, AD 1568

*Dante and Beatrice Gaze upon the Highest Heaven*, Gustave Doré, nineteenth century AD

*The Birth of Venus*, Sandro Botticelli, AD 1483-1485

*Astronomer Copernicus or Conversations with God*, Jan Matejko, AD 1873

*Atlas Bearing the Heavens*, The Cosmographicaal Glasse, AD 1559

*Solomon and the Queen of Sheba*, Giovanni De Min, AD 1824

*Mars on the Battlefield*, Bartholomeus Spranger, c. AD 1580

*Fruit and White Wine in Pewter Dishes*, Cornelis Mahu, c. AD 1640

*Round Table at Winchester*, Unknown, AD 1522

*The Adoration of the Shepherds*, Charles Le Brun, AD 1689

*Plato's Allegory of the Cave*, Jan Saenredam, AD 1604

*Plato's Cave*, Michiel Coxcie, AD sixteenth century

## **Lecture 9: Aristotle: *Ethics* I**

*Croesus Shows Solon His Treasures*, Frans Francken II, AD seventeenth century

## **Lecture 10: Aristotle: *Ethics* II**

*Architect at His Drawingboard*, Teknisk Ukeblad, AD 1893

*The Council of the Gods*, Raphael, AD 1517-18

*The Creation of Adam*, Michelangelo, c. AD 1511

*Jacob's Ladder*, Gottfried Libalt, AD 1649

*Burning Bush*, Sébastien Bourdon, seventeenth century AD

## **Lecture 11: Aristotle: *Poetics***

*The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Nicolaes Tulp*, Rembrandt, AD 1632

*Oedipus and Antigone*, Charles Jalabert, AD 1842

*Oedipus at Colonus*, Jean-Antoine-Théodore Giroust, AD 1788

*Blind Oedipus Commending His Children to the Gods*, Bénigne Gagneraux, AD 1784

*Oedipus at Colonus*, Fulchran-Jean Harriet, AD 1798

*Oedipus and Antigone Exiled From Thebes*, Eugène-Ernest Hillemacher, AD 1843

*The Revolt in Cairo*, Anne-Louis Girodet de Roussy-Trioson, AD 1810

*La Naumachia (Naumachia)*, Ulpiano Checa, AD 1894

## **Lecture 12: The Lessons of Greek Philosophy**

*Adam and Eve in Paradise (The Fall)*, Lucas Cranach the Elder, AD 1531

*The Israelites Leaving Egypt*, David Roberts, AD 1830



*The School of Athens*, Raphael, AD 1509–10, fresco, 500 x 770 cm.

*The Histories* is the fourth and final unit in *The Greeks*, year one of *Old Western Culture*. Wesley Callihan covers the most important works of Plato and Aristotle as he introduces students to the ideas that Western Civilization has wrestled with for over two thousand years. This unit's texts include Plato's *Apology*, *Crito*, *Phaedrus*, and *The Republic*, as well as Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, *Ethics*, and *Poetics*. Callihan draws from decades of teaching experience as he unpacks concepts, dispels misconceptions, and explains how the Christian church and society at large have been influenced by the ideas of the Greek philosophers, both for good and for ill.



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