

# EMBASSY COLLEGE



αὐτῆς ἃς ἐμπροσθεν μου γέγονεν, οἱ πρότεροι  
μου ἦν. **31**κἀγὼ οὐκ ᾔδειν αὐτόν, ἀλλ' ἵνα  
φανερωθῆ τῷ Ἰσραὴλ διὰ τοῦτο ἦλθον ἐγὼ  
ἐν ὕδατι βαπτίζων. **32**Καὶ ἐμαρτύρησεν  
Ἰωάννης λέγων ὅτι Τεθέαμαι τὸ πνεῦμα.



## SYLLABUS AND STUDY GUIDE

### World Religions and Christian Perspective

**BT101**

**Dr. Stephen Mansfield**

*“Religion...is the opium of the people.”*

Karl Marx

*“Religion...is a man’s total reaction upon life.”*

William James

*“Religion is an illusion and it derives its strength from the fact that it falls in which our instinctual desires.”*

Sigmund Freud

*“Religion is an attempt to get control over the sensory world, in which we are placed, by means of the wish-world, which we have developed inside us as a result of the biological and psychological necessities.”*

Sigmund Freud

*“Every religion is good that teaches man to be good.”*

Thomas Paine

*“Religion is the vision of something which stands beyond, behind and within the passing of flux of immediate things.”*

Alfred North Whitehead

*“Men never do evil so completely and cheerfully as when they do it from religious conviction.”*

Blaise Pascal

# INTRODUCTION

It is often said that we live in a secular age, a time void of religion and faith. However, nothing could be further from the truth. The fact is we live at a time when religions of every kind define our world possibly more than ever. Some of these religions have existed for centuries, some we hardly recognize as religions in any traditional sense, and some are newer idolatries that threaten to shape our future dramatically.

Christians have been notoriously ignorant of competing religions and are paying a dear price today for their ignorance. It is now well known that the cults in America grow from the pews of Christian churches. This is because most churches are skilled at generating religious excitement but are poor at discipling, training, and grounding believers in the things of God. The result is a church that is a mile wide and an inch deep, a church in which people do not know what they believe, a church that is easy prey for the religious vultures of our time.

This need to know what non-Christian religions believe is all the more dire if the Church is to go on the offensive. It is not just ignorance of the gospel that binds the unsaved. They are bound by religions that the Kingdom of Darkness has offered them to fill a religious void but with emptiness. If we are going to storm the bastions of our enemies, we must know their arsenal.

We must also know the false religions of our time if we are going to understand what makes the world as it is. We are not called to simply exist in the world; we are called to change it. We are called to liberate the captives, transform the nations, and reform the institutions of men according to God's word. This means we must be like the men of Issachar "who understood the times and knew what Israel should do..." (1 Chronicles 12:32).

We are living in days that promise more victory for the gospel on earth than ever before. The demons rage because they are losing their grip. Entire nations are about to be set free. And you are part of that victory. Learn then, not just to pass a course, but to deliver the lost, disciple the nations, and return to God what cost Him the blood of his Son.

# THE INSTRUCTOR

## Stephen Mansfield, Ph.D.

**Stephen Mansfield** believes that life ought to be lived passionately, adventurously and on a large scale. His manner of living certainly reflected this philosophy and it has made him the writer, the statesman, and the educator that he is.

Stephen was born in 1958 to a military family and grew up largely in Europe due to his father's work as an intelligence officer in the United States Army. After a youth filled with sports, travel, and mischief, Stephen was recruited to play college football but turned down the opportunity when a religious conversion moved him to attend a Christian college.

After majoring in history and philosophy, he moved to Texas where he pastored a church, earned several master's degrees, hosted a radio show and founded a nationwide network of agencies serving the poor. He moved to Tennessee in 1991 where he again pastored a church, worked extensively in Middle East politics, and completed a doctorate. It was during this time that he also began writing books. His first book on Winston Churchill was a Gold Medallion Award Finalist. He also wrote biographies of Booker T. Washington and George Whitefield as well as a number of other books on history and leadership.

In 2002, Stephen left the pastorate to write and lecture full-time while continuing to exert influence on the American political scene. It was during this time that he wrote *The Faith of George W. Bush*, which spent many weeks on the New York Times bestseller list and has been credited with profoundly shaping public discourse on religion in America.

Stephen is becoming one the nation's most sought after commentators and lecturers on matters of faith, politics, and American culture. He has founded Mansfield Group to answer the pressing needs of leading organizations for education that explains the times and the trends that define the future. He has also founded Chartwell Literary Group, a network of writers, researchers, and artists who help leaders impact culture through books and literature.

His latest books are *The Faith of the American Soldier* and *Benedict XVI: His Life and Mission*. Both have been released to widespread acclaim.

When he is not writing or lecturing, Stephen feeds his addiction to racquetball and a good laugh with friends over something wonderful to eat. His lifestyle is testimony to this maxim: "Live every day as though it were your last, for one day you are sure to be right."

## Books by Stephen Mansfield:

*Never Give In: The Extraordinary Character of Winston Churchill*  
*God's Role in America*

*Faithful Volunteers: The History of Religion in Tennessee*  
*Then Darkness Fled: The Liberating Philosophy of Booker T. Washington*  
*More Than Dates and Dead People: Recovering a Christian View of History*  
*Forgotten Founding Father: The Heroic Life of George Whitefield*

**Web Site:**

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

# Course Syllabus

## I. Course Description

This course is designed to provide an overview of the primary religions and philosophies shaping our world and to evaluate them from a Christian perspective. Specific reference is made to these non-Christian religions as they are illustrated in film and contemporary literature. An apologetic approach to each religion and philosophy is also provided.

## II. Course Objectives

The student will be able to:

- A. Identify the essential ideas, terminology and literature of the world's great religions
- B. Explain the influence of the world's major religions upon modern culture
- C. Articulate a basic Christian apologetic for each major world religion
- D. Explain those aspects of modern Christianity which allow most Christians to fall easy prey to non-Christian religions
- E. Identify the primary reference materials and organizations that examine world religions from a Christian perspective

## III. Required Textbook

*Cults, World Religions, and the Occult*, Kenneth Boa

## IV. Course Requirements

- A. Read and study the course syllabus/study guide and the textbook.
- B. Attend all the class lectures
- C. Complete the final examinations assigned by your chancellor

## V. Course Evaluation Procedure

- A. Attendance at all the lectures is required. If a lecture is missed for any (legitimate) reason, the chancellor must be informed in advance and the students must listen to an audiotape of the lesson
- B. Final examination

## VI. Bibliography

- Abdul-Haqq, Adiyah Akbar. *Sharing Your Faith With a Muslim*.
- Aberle, David. *The Peyote Religion Among the Navaho*.
- Accad, Fouad Elias. *Building Bridges: Christianity and Islam*.
- Akhtar, Shabbir. *A Faith for All Seasons: Islam and the Challenge of the Modern World*.
- Bahr, Donald, Juan Gregorio, David Lopez and Albert Alvarez. *Piman Shamanism and Staying Sickness*.
- Bavinck, Johan. *The Church Between Temple and Mosque*.
- Boi-Nai, Vincent. "The Christian Response to the Phenomenon of Witchcraft in Ghana" (M.A. thesis, Microform).
- Braaten, Carl E. *No Other Gospel: Christianity Among the World's Religions*.
- Brown, Joseph. *The Spiritual Legacy of the American Indian*.
- Burnett, David. *The Spirit of Buddhism: A Christian Perspective of Buddhist Thought*.
- Burnett, David. *The Spirit of Hinduism*.
- Bushey, Clinton. *The Superiority of Christianity: A Comparative Study of the Religions of the World*.
- Carmody, Denise and John. *Prayer in World Religions*.
- Cave, Sydney. *Christianity and Some Living Religions*.
- Chapman, Colin. *Cross and Crescent*.
- Clendenin, Daniel. *Many Gods, Many Lords: Christianity Encounters World Religions*.
- Cornille, Catherine and Valeer Neckebrouck. *A Universal Faith? Peoples, Cultures, Religions and the Christ: Essays in honor of Frank De Graeve*.
- Crocker, Jon. *Vital Souls: Bororo Cosmology, Natural Symbolism and Shamanism*.
- Desmangles, Leslie. *The Faces of the Gods: Vodou and Roman Catholicism in Haiti*.
- Dretke, James. *Christian Approach to Muslims: Reflections from West Africa*.
- Dunham, Katherine. *Island Possessed*.

Durkheim, Emile. *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*.

Eliade, Mircea. *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy*.

Esposito, John. *Islam: The Straight Path*.

Firth, Ramond. *Tikopia Ritual and Belief*.

Fleming, Daniel John. *Attitudes Toward Other Faiths*.

Gehman, Richard J. *African Traditional Religions in Biblical Perspective*.

Geisler, Norman and Abdul Saleeb. *Answering Islam: The crescent in the Light of the Cross*.

Georges, Robert A. *Studies on Mythology*.

Gilmore, George. *Animism, or Thought Currents of Primitive Peoples*.

Grant, George Honro. *The Religions of the World in Relation to Christianity*.

Gross, Edward. *Miracles, Demons, and Spiritual Warfare: An Urgent Call for Discernment*.

Harner, Michael. *The Way of the Shaman*.

Howard, James. *Oklahoma Seminoles: Medicines Magic and Religion*.

Hultkrantz, Ake. *Native Religions of North America: The Power of Visions and Fertility*.

Jurji, Edward Jabra. *The Christian Interpretation of Religion, Christianity in its Human and Creative Relationship with the World's Cultures and Faiths*.

Kateregga, Badru. *A Muslim and a Christian in Dialogue*.

Kramer, Kenneth. *The Sacred Art of Dying: How the World Religions Understand Death*.

LaBarre, Weston. *The Ghost Dance: Origins of Religion*.

Lawson, E. Thomas. *Religions of Africa: Traditions in Transformation*.

Lehman, Arthur and James Myers. *Magic, Witchcraft and Religion: An Anthropological Study of the Supernatural*.

Leslie, Charles. *Anthropology of Folk Religion*.

Levy, Jerrold E. and Raymond Neutra and Dennis Parker. *Hand Trembling, Frenzy Witchcraft and Moth Madness: A Study of Navajo Seizure Disorders*.

Lowie, Robert. *Primitive Religion*.

Luhrmann, T. M. *Persuasions of the Witch's Craft: Ritual Magic in Contemporary England*.

MacArthur, John. *Terrorism, Jihad and the Bible*.

Musk, Bill. *Touching the Soul of Islam*.

Musk, Bill. *The Unseen Face of Islam*.

Neill, Stephen Charles. *Christian Faith and Other Faiths*.

Nickel, Gordon. *Peaceable Witness Among Muslims*.

Owens, Donald. "Korean Shamanism: Its Components, Context and Functions" (Ph.D. dissertation).



Parshall, Phil. *Inside the Community: Understanding Muslims through Their Traditions*.

Parshall, Phil. *The Cross and the Crescent: Reflections on Christian-Muslim Spirituality*.

Renard, John. *In the Footsteps of Muhammad: Understanding the Islamic Experience*.

Richard, Herbert. *Following Jesus in the Hindu Context*.

Ridenour, Fritz. *What's the Difference? A Biblical Comparison of Orthodox Christianity with Major Religions and Major Cults*.

Robinson, Neal. *Christ in Islam and Christianity*.

Rubin, Barry. *You Bring the Bagels, I'll Bring the Gospel*.

Schumann, H.W. *The Historical Buddha*.

Shenk, Calvin. *Who Do You Say That I Am? Christians Encounter Other Religions*.

Shenk, David. *Global Gods*.

Smith, Huston. *The Religions of Mankind*.

Soderblom, Nathan. *The Living God: Basal Forms of Personal Religion*.

Streeter, Burnett. *The Buddha and the Christ: An Exploration of the Meaning of the Universe and of the Purpose of Human Life*.

Thorpe, Shirley. *African Traditional Religions: An Introduction*.

Tillich, Paul. *Christianity and the Encounter of the World Religions*.

Toynbee, Arnold Joseph. *Christianity among the Religions of the World*.

Turner, Harold. *Bibliography of New Religious Movements in Primal Societies*, Vol. 5. Latin America.

Vos, Johannes. *A Christian Introduction to Religions of the World*.

Werbner, Richard. *Ritual Passage, Sacred Journey: The Process and Organization of Religious Movement*.

Wheaton Theology Conference. *The Challenge of Religious Pluralism: An Evangelical Analysis and Response*.

Wolfe, Regina. *Ethics and World Religions*.