



SMALL-GROUP CURRICULUM

Building and Stress-Testing an Objective Moral System

A full course for young, honest seekers learning how to identify the required parts of a coherent objective moral system and test whether a Christian moral claim actually supplies them.

Teacher posture

Run this as a moral-system laboratory, not a debate club. The teacher is dynamic, curious, and creative, but the intellectual atmosphere is disciplined: every claim is welcome, every shortcut is slowed down, and every person is treated as more important than the argument.

Rigorous

Charitable

Concrete

Repair-oriented

INSIDE THIS CURRICULUM

1. Teacher guide	2. Tool mechanics	3. Twelve sessions
4. Student handouts	5. Rubrics	6. Capstone lab

1 Threshold

Preliminary check: enough structure?

2 Stress Test

Current tool: pressure the structure.

3 Particulars

Advanced case audit: apply it.

TEACHER GUIDE

Course identity and promises

The course teaches students to ask what must be supplied before a moral claim can count as part of a coherent objective moral system. It does not require students to begin with the same worldview, and it does not reward cheap skepticism or defensive certainty.

Best group size

Six to twelve students. Small enough for every student to speak; large enough for disagreement to be visible.

Recommended age

Older teens, college students, or young adults who can handle disagreement with patience and care.

Default rhythm

Twelve sessions of 75 to 100 minutes. Each meeting includes a concept, a lab activity, a debrief, and one artifact.

Teacher role

Guide, coach, and creative pressure-tester. The teacher models precision, not dominance.

The sentence students should remember

We are not asking whether this sounds moral. We are asking whether it supplies the structure needed to be a coherent objective moral system.

NORMS

The covenant of inquiry

- Name the claim before criticizing it.
- Ask which component an answer is meant to supply.
- Treat missing structure as an invitation to clarify.
- Do not use the tool to humiliate, corner, or score people.
- Let strong answers become stronger; let weak answers become more precise.

TEACHING RHYTHM

A repeatable session arc

The teacher can be inventive, but the learning rhythm should stay predictable. Each meeting should move from concrete claim, to concept, to lab, to tool use, to repair.

Time	Teacher move	Student work
0-10	Open with a concrete moral claim or dilemma.	Name first reactions without defending them.
10-25	Teach one structural idea and model one question.	Capture the component, route, or boundary being introduced.
25-55	Run the lab activity in pairs or teams.	Produce a visible artifact, not just discussion.
55-75	Connect the artifact to the live tool.	Mark routes, support strength, checks, or pressure points.
75-90	Debrief with repair language.	Name what would make the account stronger.
90-100	Assign the carry-forward task.	Save one claim, question, or repair note for next time.

MATERIALS

Keep the room hands-on

Always available	Purpose
Claim cards	Keep discussion concrete and prevent abstract drift.
Component cards	Let students physically locate which part of the system is being supplied.
Route cards	Separate the source being appealed to from the component it must carry.
Boundary cards	Test whether the account collapses into emotion, obedience, advice, or vague guidance.
Audit sheets	Make every session produce evidence of learning.
Timer and visible board	Keep the dynamic teacher playful without letting the room become chaotic.

Dynamic does not mean improvised standards

A creative teacher may use movement, courtroom scenes, gallery walks, and dramatic role play. The standard remains constant: name the claim, locate the component, test the route, mark support honestly, and ask the next fair question.

LEARNING DESIGN

Durable understandings and outcomes

Durable understanding	What students should be able to do
A moral source is not yet a moral system.	Distinguish a command, text, intuition, feeling, or practical benefit from a full moral architecture.
Objective morality requires structure.	Explain meaning, truth, authority, access, force, guidance, scope, and correction.
A fair challenge is specific.	Ask the relevant pressure question instead of attacking a whole worldview at once.
A high score is not a proof.	Read the tool's numbers as prompts for attention, not verdicts about truth.
Honest inquiry repairs.	Identify what would need to be added for a claim to become stronger.

ASSESSMENT

What good learning looks like

Clarity

Non-circularity

Consistency

Charity

What not to assess

Do not grade students on whether they agree with the teacher, become skeptical, remain Christian, or reach a preferred conclusion. Grade the quality of the thinking: stable claims, clear components, honest support levels, fair questions, and principled repair moves.

LEARNING CHECKS

Pre-assessment, checkpoints, and post-assessment

Students should see their own growth. These prompts make the course measurable without turning it into a test of belief.

Checkpoint	Prompt	What the teacher is looking for
Before Session 1	Write one moral claim you believe and explain why it is objectively true.	Baseline use of meaning, truth, authority, access, force, guidance, scope, and correction.
After Session 4	Which component is easiest for you to assume instead of explain?	Early awareness of circularity and authority shortcuts.
After Session 8	Choose a hard case and show how your rule treats like cases alike.	Stable guidance and consistent scope.
After Session 11	Name the strongest pressure question against your current account.	Willingness to pressure-test without defensiveness.
After Session 12	Rewrite the original claim with the missing structure supplied or honestly identified.	Growth in precision, humility, repair, and confidence calibration.

Use before instruction

Collect the first prompt before teaching the component language. The goal is to preserve a clean baseline.

Use after capstone

Return the first prompt beside the final version. Ask students to mark where their thinking became clearer, thinner, or more repairable.

COURSE MAP

Twelve-session sequence

Each session gives one core concept enough time to become usable. The capstone asks students to put the whole architecture together.

Session	Focus	Core artifact
1	Moral Claims Are Not Moral Systems	Claim classification sheet
2	Moral Meaning	Moral vocabulary sheet
3	Truth Maker	Truth-maker chart
4	Authority Check	Authority-check protocol
5	Moral Access	Moral access map
6	Binding Force	Binding force worksheet
7	Case Guidance	Duty-ranking grid
8	Consistent Scope	Scope and exception map
9	Correction Method	Correction method protocol
10	Source Routes and the Moral Truth Map	Moral truth source map
11	Boundary Tests and Pressure Questions	Boundary and pressure worksheet
12	Capstone Moral-System Lab	Capstone audit packet

FLEXIBLE FORMATS

Ways to adapt the course

Six-week intensive

Pair sessions 1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8, 9-10, and 11-12. Keep the artifacts, but shorten debriefs.

Weekend retreat

Use four blocks: architecture, source routes, boundary pressure, capstone. Assign the component table as pre-work.

Semester course

Expand each session into two meetings: concept lab first, case lab second. Add peer feedback conferences before capstone.

Mentor pair

Use one claim carried through all twelve sessions. The mentor asks questions; the student owns every repair move.

CORE ARCHITECTURE

The eight required components

These are the conceptual anchors for the whole curriculum. Students do not need to memorize jargon; they need to understand the job each component performs.

Component	Student question	Why it is necessary
Moral Meaning	What do moral words mean?	Prevents moral language from collapsing into approval, disgust, usefulness, or authority words.
Truth Maker	What makes moral claims true?	Prevents moral claims from becoming attitudes, commands, or social signals.
Authority Check	How is authority tested as morally trustworthy?	Prevents moral reasoning from becoming bare obedience to an assumed authority.
Moral Access	How can accountable people know the standard?	Prevents obligation from becoming hidden, private, or inaccessible.
Binding Force	Why does the standard obligate?	Prevents morality from thinning into advice, reward, threat, or strategy.
Case Guidance	How does the system decide hard cases?	Prevents broad ideals from replacing action-guiding principles.
Consistent Scope	Who is bound, and are like cases treated alike?	Prevents tribal, historical, or authority-favored exceptions.
Correction Method	How are mistaken interpretations repaired?	Prevents every revision from becoming ad hoc convenience.

Teaching move

When a student gives an answer, pause and ask: Which component did that answer just support? If the class cannot place it, the answer may be interesting but not yet structurally useful.

TOOL MECHANICS

Live tool mechanics

The tool should not feel like a separate gadget after the lesson. It is the shared workspace where the group makes claims visible, scores support conservatively, and sees which parts of the system still need substantiation.

Tool area	What students do	Teacher question
State the claim	Choose or write the moral-system claim being tested.	Is the claim narrow enough to evaluate without shifting?
Required components	Work through all eight components as mandatory parts of a coherent objective moral system.	Which component is this answer meant to substantiate?
Primary route	Choose the main source route carrying each component.	Is the route a source of truth, access, authority, force, or only motivation?
Support strength	Mark how strong the support is from 0 to 4.	What evidence would raise or lower the number?
Substantiation checks	Complete the component-specific checkboxes.	Does the answer treat like cases alike, bind the right agents, and avoid special pleading?
Source map	Read the lane and height of each component's support.	Is one route doing too much work, or is the hybrid account principled?
Coherence ledger	Watch which required components are ready, thin, or missing.	What is the next repair move?
Boundary tests	Ask whether the account is distinct from feeling, obedience, advice, and vague guidance.	Where does the account risk collapse?
Top pressure	Use the highest-pressure prompts as fair challenge questions.	Can the student answer the exact pressure, not a different one?

How to read numbers

Support strength is a disciplined estimate from 0 to 4: 0 means no usable support has been supplied; 1 means asserted; 2 means plausible but thin; 3 means supported; 4 means strong. It is not a truth meter, a piety meter, or a vote.

VOCABULARY

Plain-language glossary

Use these meanings consistently so students can spend their energy on reasoning rather than guessing what the labels mean.

Term	Plain meaning for students
Moral claim	A statement that says something is right, wrong, good, evil, required, or forbidden.
Moral system	The larger structure that explains what moral words mean, what makes claims true, who is bound, and how hard cases are decided.
Objective	Not made true merely by personal feeling, group approval, usefulness, or power.
Component	One required job a moral system must perform.
Route	The source or pathway the student says carries a component.
Support strength	A 0 to 4 estimate of how much substantiation the selected route supplies for that component.
Substantiation check	A concrete checkpoint showing that the answer is not just asserted.
Boundary test	A question that checks whether the account has collapsed into a nearby substitute.
Pressure question	A targeted challenge raised by the current choices in the tool.
Repair move	A specific addition, distinction, or correction that would make the account stronger.

Teacher language habit

When a word becomes foggy, ask students to translate it into the glossary language and then test whether the translation still says what they intended.

SESSION 1

Moral Claims Are Not Moral Systems

Essential question

What extra structure is needed before a moral claim becomes part of a coherent objective moral system?

Learning outcomes

- Distinguish moral reactions, commands, advice, claims, and systems.
- Explain why a list of moral claims is not yet a moral system.
- Practice asking for missing structure without sounding hostile.

Teacher prep

Print the claim cards. Prepare five baskets or columns: feeling, command, advice, moral claim, system element.

Opening move

Ask students to finish: 'When I say something is wrong, I usually mean...'. Collect answers without correction.

Core teaching

Give the central distinction: a moral system must supply meaning, truth, authority, access, force, guidance, scope, and correction. A source may be important, but a source is not the whole system.

Main lab

Claim-sort lab. Students sort statements such as 'cruelty disgusts me,' 'God forbids murder,' 'kindness helps society,' and 'lying is wrong.' Then they explain what would have to be added for each to become system-level.

Dynamic option

Run a 'moral courtroom' improvisation. One student plays a claim; others play meaning, truth, authority, access, force, guidance, scope, and correction. The claim cannot enter the courtroom until each role has been addressed.

Debrief

Which statements felt moral but did not yet supply a system?
Which missing part was easiest to overlook?

Take-home work

Bring one moral claim from a sermon, family rule, social media post, or personal conviction. Write what it supplies and what it leaves unspecified.

Student artifact

Claim classification sheet

SESSION 2

Moral Meaning

Essential question

What do moral words mean before we use them to argue for objectivity?

Learning outcomes

- Define wrong, good, duty, evil, and obligation without circular slogans.
- Separate moral meaning from dislike, disgust, usefulness, and command.
- Use translation tests to detect unstable moral language.

Teacher prep

Prepare the moral word translation worksheet and a board with five columns: disliked, forbidden, harmful, unwise, objectively wrong.

Opening move

Ask whether 'That is wrong' means the same thing as 'I hate that.' Let students locate the difference.

Core teaching

Moral meaning asks what the words are doing. If wrong only means disliked, forbidden, or impractical, the claim has not yet reached objective moral meaning.

Main lab

Translation test. Replace moral terms in a claim with disliked, forbidden, harmful, unwise, or contrary to God's nature. Students decide which replacement preserves the original claim and which changes it.

Dynamic option

Create a 'word autopsy' wall. Students dissect one moral sentence and label what each moral word is supposed to contribute.

Debrief

Which definitions smuggled in the word being defined? Which definitions made the claim less moral than it first sounded?

Take-home work	Student artifact
Write two definitions of 'wrong': one weak and one stronger. Explain what the stronger definition adds.	Moral vocabulary sheet

SESSION 3

Truth Maker

Essential question

If a moral claim is true, what makes it true?

Learning outcomes

- Explain the difference between a truth-apt claim and an expression of feeling.
- Identify possible truth makers and test whether they do more than assert.
- Spot preference, power, agreement, and tradition when they are being treated as truth makers.

Teacher prep

Prepare comparison cards: math claim, historical claim, legal claim, taste claim, moral claim.

Opening move

Ask what makes 'the meeting starts at 7' true or false. Then ask what makes 'cruelty is wrong' true or false.

Core teaching

A truth maker is the feature, fact, standard, relation, nature, or principle that explains why the claim is true. Naming a person, text, or emotion is not enough unless it explains truth.

Main lab

Truth-maker shelf. Teams place claims on shelves labeled measurement, record, law, taste, command, character, flourishing, reason, and unknown. They defend whether the shelf really makes the claim true.

Dynamic option

Stage a 'truth-maker speed date.' Each possible truth maker has ninety seconds to explain what it can and cannot ground.

Debrief

Which proposed truth makers were only sources of information? Which actually tried to explain truth?

Take-home work	Student artifact
For the claim brought in Session 1, name the proposed truth maker and one worry about it.	Truth-maker chart

SESSION 4

Authority Check

Essential question

How can a moral authority be recognized without assuming it is already moral?

Learning outcomes

- Distinguish power, command, status, and moral authority.
- Explain why authority needs a moral trustworthiness test.
- Ask non-circular questions about divine, scriptural, institutional, or inner authority claims.

Teacher prep

Prepare three authority cards that issue incompatible commands while each claims moral authority.

Opening move

Ask whether a command from a powerful person automatically makes an action morally right.

Core teaching

Authority can communicate, enforce, or clarify a standard. But if authority is treated as moral only because it says so, the system risks becoming obedience rather than moral evaluation.

Main lab

Three authorities exercise. Teams receive incompatible commands from three alleged authorities. They must design a test that can select legitimate moral authority without assuming the answer.

Dynamic option

Run an 'authority audit press conference.' One student plays an authority; others ask what would count as evidence of moral failure.

Debrief

What tests were genuinely moral? Which tests just repeated loyalty, power, tradition, or familiarity?

Take-home work	Student artifact
Write three questions that could test a claimed moral authority without insulting the person who trusts it.	Authority-check protocol

SESSION 5

Moral Access

Essential question

If people are morally accountable, how can they know what binds them?

Learning outcomes

- Explain why moral access matters for accountability.
- Compare public methods, private conviction, texts, traditions, reason, and conscience.
- Practice resolving sincere disagreement without dismissing either person.

Teacher prep

Prepare disagreement pairs: two sincere people, same question, incompatible conclusions.

Opening move

Ask whether someone can be blamed for violating a rule they could not reasonably know.

Core teaching

Objective obligations need enough access to guide accountable agents. Access does not require perfect agreement, but it does require a method for knowing, comparing, and correcting claims.

Main lab

Disagreement map. Students chart two sincere disagreement cases and identify what method could resolve or at least discipline the disagreement.

Dynamic option

Use a silent gallery walk. Each team posts a method of access; classmates add sticky notes naming strengths and blind spots.

Debrief

Which access routes were public? Which were private? Which could outsiders fairly examine?

Take-home work	Student artifact
Interview someone about how they know a moral claim is true. Classify the access route they use.	Moral access map

SESSION 6

Binding Force

Essential question

Why does morality obligate instead of merely advising or rewarding?

Learning outcomes

- Distinguish duty from benefit, prudence, fear, social approval, and reward.
- Explain why binding force must survive cost, secrecy, and disadvantage.
- Ask whether a route supplies obligation or only motivation.

Teacher prep

Prepare costly-duty scenarios: hidden honesty, unrewarded mercy, unpopular justice, costly loyalty.

Opening move

Ask whether 'this benefits you' means the same thing as 'you are morally required to do this.'

Core teaching

Binding force explains why someone ought to comply even when noncompliance would be easier, safer, or more profitable. Motivation is not the same as obligation.

Main lab

Costly duty test. Students run several cases through reward, punishment, flourishing, command, and duty language. They identify which accounts explain obligation and which explain incentives.

Dynamic option

Play 'advice or obligation.' The teacher reads statements rapidly; students move to one side of the room for advice and the other for obligation, then defend edge cases.

Debrief

Which explanations became practical advice? Which supplied a genuine 'ought'?

Take-home work	Student artifact
Rewrite one prudential reason as a moral obligation only if you can add the missing bridge.	Binding force worksheet

SESSION 7

Case Guidance

Essential question

Can the system decide hard cases before the preferred conclusion is known?

Learning outcomes

- Explain why broad ideals need decision rules.
- Rank competing duties in hard cases.
- Identify when a method is being reverse engineered to protect a conclusion.

Teacher prep

Prepare case cards: lying to protect life, mercy versus punishment, loyalty versus justice, harm prevention versus promise keeping.

Opening move

Ask whether 'love your neighbor' decides every concrete case by itself.

Core teaching

Case guidance requires principles that apply before the answer is chosen. A moral system needs rules for conflicts between duties, not just inspirational language.

Main lab

Moral triage board. Teams rank duties for each case and state the rule that decides the ranking.

Dynamic option

Use a rotating judge format. Each team decides one case; a second team appeals; a third team asks whether the rule would still work in a swapped case.

Debrief

Which rules worked before the conclusion? Which rules appeared only after the group knew what it wanted?

Take-home work	Student artifact
Choose one hard case and write the rule that decides it, then test the same rule on a similar case.	Duty-ranking grid

SESSION 8

Consistent Scope

Essential question

Who is bound, and do like cases receive like treatment?

Learning outcomes

- State the scope of a moral rule clearly.
- Detect special pleading for favored persons, groups, eras, or authorities.
- Apply same-case swaps to test consistency.

Teacher prep

Prepare same-case swap cards that change tribe, religion, gender, era, authority, or social status while preserving the morally relevant facts.

Opening move

Ask when an exception is legitimate and when it is special pleading.

Core teaching

Objective morality needs a principled account of who is bound. Exceptions can be legitimate only when they rest on relevant moral differences.

Main lab

Same-case swap. Students judge a case, then swap the person, era, or authority. If the judgment changes, they must name the relevant moral difference.

Dynamic option

Build a 'scope fence.' Students place agents inside or outside the rule and attach reasons to every boundary.

Debrief

Which exceptions were principled? Which protected a favored group or result?

Take-home work	Student artifact
Find a moral rule that seems universal. List possible exceptions and classify them as principled or suspicious.	Scope and exception map

SESSION 9

Correction Method

Essential question

How does a moral system identify and repair mistaken interpretation?

Learning outcomes

- Explain why any moral community needs a correction method.
- Distinguish moral discovery, moral change, and convenient revision.
- Evaluate historical correction without presentism or defensiveness.

Teacher prep

Prepare historical and contemporary cases of moral revision: slavery, coercion, punishment, gender hierarchy, violence, generosity.

Opening move

Ask whether a community can sincerely inherit a wrong moral belief.

Core teaching

A correction method names how error is detected and repaired. Without it, a community may call every inherited view right until it changes, and every change right after it happens.

Main lab

Revision diagnosis. Teams classify a shift as moral fact changed, interpretation improved, earlier judgment was wrong, or unclear. They must defend the correction rule.

Dynamic option

Hold a 'future council.' Students imagine a future generation challenging one of today's assumptions and ask what method should decide whether we were wrong.

Debrief

Which correction methods were principled? Which simply blessed whatever the group currently believes?

Take-home work	Student artifact
Write a correction rule that could revise a cherished belief without becoming ad hoc.	Correction method protocol

SESSION 10

Source Routes and the Moral Truth Map

Essential question

Which sources are carrying which components, and how strong is the support?

Learning outcomes

- Name the nine source routes used in the tool.
- Map each required component to a route and support strength.
- Interpret concentration, thin support, and hybrid accounts without overclaiming.

Teacher prep

Prepare route cards and a blank source-lane chart numbered 1 through 9.

Opening move

Ask students to name every source someone might appeal to for moral truth.

Core teaching

Routes are not verdicts. They tell the tool which pathway is supposed to carry the component. The source map visualizes dependency, support strength, and check completion.

Main lab

Source map build. Teams assign each component of one claim to a source route, set support from 0 to 4, and draw horizontal lines for average route support.

Dynamic option

Run 'route defense stations.' Each station represents one source route. Students rotate and write what that route can supply, what it cannot supply, and what pressure it faces.

Debrief

Was the system concentrated in one route? Was it a patchwork? Which route had the most responsibility?

Take-home work	Student artifact
Complete a source map for the moral claim you have carried through the course.	Moral truth source map

SESSION 11

Boundary Tests and Pressure Questions

Essential question

Does the account remain moral under pressure, or does it collapse into a nearby substitute?

Learning outcomes

- Use the four boundary tests charitably and precisely.
- Explain what contributes pressure to a challenge.
- Ask one rigorous question at a time without turning the tool into a weapon.

Teacher prep

Prepare boundary cards and challenge cards tied to authority, access, meaning, history, guidance, and sufficiency.

Opening move

Ask whether a moral-sounding claim can secretly be only a feeling, command, or practical suggestion.

Core teaching

Boundary tests ask whether the current account is distinct from emotion, obedience, practical advice, and vague guidance. Top pressure questions identify where the current setup most needs repair.

Main lab

Collapse diagnosis. Teams run a claim through all four boundaries, then choose the highest-pressure question and draft a fair version of it.

Dynamic option

Use a 'pressure clinic.' One team presents a claim. Other teams act as doctors, naming symptoms, likely diagnosis, and repair options.

Debrief

Which pressure questions clarified the claim? Which versions sounded like gotchas and needed rewriting?

Take-home work	Student artifact
Prepare your capstone claim with at least two pressure questions you are willing to answer.	Boundary and pressure worksheet

SESSION 12

Capstone Moral-System Lab

Essential question

Can the proposed system survive a full, fair, component-by-component audit?

Learning outcomes

- Present a moral-system claim clearly and narrowly.
- Substantiate all eight required components with routes, strength, and checks.
- Receive and answer boundary and pressure questions with intellectual honesty.

Teacher prep

Give students the capstone template in advance. Prepare rubrics, timer, and feedback forms.

Opening move

Remind students: the goal is not embarrassment. The goal is clarity, repair, and honest confidence.

Core teaching

Review the capstone sequence: claim, components, source map, boundaries, pressure questions, repair plan.

Main lab

Each team presents for seven minutes, receives five minutes of questions, and names one repair move before leaving the hot seat.

Dynamic option

End with a 'clarity gallery.' Students post the strongest question they received and the best repair move they discovered.

Debrief

What changed in your confidence, not just in level but in precision? Which component now seems most important?

Take-home work	Student artifact
Write a one-page reflection: what I now require before calling a moral claim a coherent objective moral system.	Capstone audit packet

STUDENT HANDOUT

Live tool walk-through

Use this checklist when students move from discussion into the Moral System Stress Test. The goal is to slow the process enough that every choice means something.

Step	Student action	Evidence of honest work
1	State one stable claim.	The claim does not change when pressure begins.
2	Complete every required component.	No component is skipped because it feels obvious.
3	Choose a primary route for each component.	The route is named for the job it performs.
4	Set support strength conservatively.	The number reflects evidence, not confidence or loyalty.
5	Complete substantiation checks one by one.	Unchecked boxes remain visible as unfinished work.
6	Read the source map.	Students can explain concentration, gaps, and hybrid dependencies.
7	Answer boundary and pressure questions.	Students answer the actual question and name repairs when needed.
8	Export or hand off the state.	The next tool or discussion begins from the same claim, not a memory of it.

Student discipline

Never let a filled screen substitute for a substantiated system. A box is complete only when the student can explain why that choice belongs there.

STUDENT HANDOUT

Full moral-system audit sheet

Use this page repeatedly. It is the bridge between the curriculum and the tool.

Component	Primary route	Support 0-4	Checks complete?	Repair note
Moral Meaning				
Truth Maker				
Authority Check				
Moral Access				
Binding Force				
Case Guidance				
Consistent Scope				
Correction Method				

Strict readiness rule

A component is ready only when the route is chosen, support is marked Supported or Strong, and the relevant checks are complete. A persuasive speech does not replace this structure.

STUDENT HANDOUT

Source route reference

Route	What it claims to supply	Question it must answer
God's nature	Goodness is grounded in God's character.	Must explain how that nature is identified as good without circularity.
Divine command	Obligation is grounded in God's commands.	Must explain why command is morally good rather than merely authoritative.
Scripture	Moral guidance is revealed in biblical texts.	Must supply interpretation rules and handle sincere disagreement.
Holy Spirit guidance	Moral knowledge is guided by divine inner work.	Must distinguish guidance from intuition, bias, and incompatible reports.
Church tradition	The community's teaching tradition helps interpret morality.	Must explain authority, correction, and disagreement across traditions.
Conscience or intuition	Moral knowledge is recognized inwardly.	Must explain why some intuitions track truth and others mislead.
Reason or natural law	Reason detects moral structure in human nature or creation.	Must show why the discovered order is morally binding.
Human flourishing	Moral truths are tied to what helps persons and communities flourish.	Must bridge usefulness to obligation.
Hybrid Christian account	Several routes share the load.	Must say which part carries which component without contradiction.

STUDENT HANDOUT

Boundary and pressure worksheet

Boundary	Question
Emotion	Is this more than feeling, empathy, disgust, conscience, approval, or preference?
Obedience	Is this more than submission to an authority already assumed to be moral?
Practical	Is this more than usefulness, social benefit, safety, or flourishing strategy?
Guidance	Can this decide hard cases and rank duties before the desired conclusion is chosen?

Pressure type	Fair version of the question
Meaning pressure	What does the moral word add beyond approval, disgust, usefulness, or command?
Truth pressure	What makes the claim true even if individuals or cultures disagree?
Authority pressure	What would count as evidence that an authority claim is morally mistaken?
Access pressure	How can sincere, informed disagreement be disciplined or resolved?
Guidance pressure	What rule decides the hard case before the preferred answer is known?
Scope pressure	Would the same judgment apply if the person, group, era, or authority changed?
Correction pressure	What rule distinguishes moral discovery from convenient revision?

TEACHER TOOLKIT

Activity bank for a dynamic teacher

Activity	Use it when	How it works
Claim sort	Students confuse claims with systems.	Sort statements into feeling, command, advice, claim, and system element.
Word autopsy	Moral language is vague.	Dissect one moral sentence and label what each term contributes.
Three authorities	Authority is being assumed.	Compare incompatible commands and design a moral trustworthiness test.
Same-case swap	Scope is inconsistent.	Change person, group, era, or authority while preserving the relevant facts.
Pressure clinic	A claim needs repair.	Students diagnose collapse risks and prescribe the next component to strengthen.
Future council	Correction feels threatening.	Imagine a future critique of today's moral confidence and test repair methods.
Source stations	Routes are blurry.	Teams rotate through source routes and list what each can and cannot supply.
Clarity gallery	Students need synthesis.	Post the strongest question, repair move, and remaining uncertainty after each capstone.

Improvisation rule

The teacher can be theatrical, playful, and surprising, but the improvisation must always serve the same discipline: name the claim, locate the component, test the support, and ask the next fair question.

TEACHER TOOLKIT

Facilitating difficult moments

Moment	Teacher response
A student feels their faith is under attack.	Slow the pace. Say: 'We are not grading your sincerity. We are asking which part of the system this answer supplies.'
A skeptic becomes triumphant.	Redirect from victory to repair. Ask: 'What would a stronger answer need to add?'
The group drifts into culture-war debate.	Return to architecture. Ask which component is being discussed and which evidence is relevant.
Someone uses a slogan repeatedly.	Affirm the concern, then ask for the decision rule, truth maker, or access method behind it.
A student says everything is subjective.	Ask them to classify that statement: feeling, claim, system, or practical stance. Do not let it bypass the same standards.
A student is silent.	Give a written role: meaning watcher, authority watcher, guidance watcher, or repair watcher.

Emotional safety without intellectual softness

Students should feel respected, not protected from hard questions. Keep tone gentle and standards firm. That combination is the heart of the curriculum.

CAPSTONE

Final moral-system lab

Presentation part	What students must provide
Claim	A narrow moral-system claim stated in one or two sentences.
Eight components	For each component: route, support strength, completed checks, and one repair note if weak.
Source map	A visual or table showing which routes carry which components.
Boundary tests	One sentence on emotion, obedience, practical, and guidance boundaries.
Pressure questions	Two hard questions the team is willing to answer honestly.
Repair plan	One specific change that would strengthen the system if the current answer is thin.

Timing

Seven minutes presentation, five minutes questions, three minutes repair statement.

Question rule

Questioners may ask only about a component, route, boundary, or pressure point. No speeches disguised as questions.

Capstone closing prompt

What changed in your confidence? Do not answer only higher or lower. Answer more precise, less circular, better grounded, more humble, or more repairable.

RUBRIC

Evaluate thinking, not agreement

Criterion	Emerging	Developing	Strong	Excellent
Clarity	Claim shifts or remains vague.	Claim is mostly clear but still broad.	Claim is narrow and stable.	Claim is precise, testable, and stays stable under pressure.
Component coverage	Several required parts are missing.	Most parts are named but thin.	All parts are addressed with some support.	All parts are clearly substantiated and connected.
Non-circularity	Assumes what it must explain.	Notices circularity after prompting.	Avoids major circular moves.	Identifies and repairs subtle circularity.
Charity	Treats questions as attacks.	Answers politely but defensively.	Receives questions as clarification.	Improves the account through fair criticism.
Case guidance	Cannot decide hard cases.	Decides cases inconsistently.	Uses a stable decision rule.	Ranks duties and tests the rule across swapped cases.
Correction	No repair method.	Ad hoc repair method.	Principled repair method.	Can distinguish discovery, change, and mistaken interpretation.

Teacher note

A student can receive high marks while defending a Christian account, doubting one, or remaining undecided. The rubric rewards intellectual honesty and structural clarity.

PEER FEEDBACK

Questions that help without taking over

Peer feedback should make the presenting team more precise. Students are not trying to win the capstone for someone else; they are helping the team see what still needs support.

Feedback area	Question to ask the presenting team	Helpful sentence stem
Claim clarity	What exactly are you claiming is objectively true?	I hear the claim as... Is that stable?
Component coverage	Which required component is least developed?	The component that still seems thin is...
Route fit	Does the chosen route actually carry the component?	This route seems to supply..., but it may not yet supply...
Boundary pressure	Where might the account collapse into a substitute?	The strongest boundary worry I see is...
Repair	What one change would make the system stronger?	A repair move worth trying is...

Before speaking

Ask: am I clarifying, testing, or repairing? If the answer is none of these, wait.

After receiving feedback

The presenting team must name one repair they accept, one question they need more time for, and one answer they still stand behind.

FINAL FIELD GUIDE

The questions students should carry with them

When you hear...	Ask...
That is wrong.	What does wrong mean here?
God commands it.	How is that authority recognized as morally trustworthy?
The Bible teaches it.	Which interpretive rule decides the disputed case, and why that rule?
I know it in my conscience.	How do we test conscience when sincere people disagree?
It helps people flourish.	Why is flourishing morally binding rather than merely good advice?
Love decides it.	What does love require when duties conflict?
That was acceptable then.	Did the moral fact change, or did interpretation improve?
Everyone knows this.	Who is everyone, and what access method makes the claim knowable?

The final habit

Before accepting or rejecting a moral-system claim, ask what it supplies for meaning, truth, authority, access, force, guidance, scope, and correction. That habit is the curriculum.