



# **Vulnerability and Care: Christian Reflections on the Philosophy of Medicine (Religion and the University)**

*Andrew Sloane*

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Medical and bioethical issues have spawned a great deal of debate in both public and academic contexts. Little has been done, however, to engage with the underlying issues of the nature of medicine and its role in human community. This book seeks to fill that gap by providing Christian philosophical and theological reflections on the nature and purposes of medicine and its role in a Christian understanding of human society.

The book provides two main 'doorways' into a Christian philosophical theology of medicine. First it presents a brief description of the contexts in which medicine is practiced in the early 21st century, identifying key problems and challenges that medicine must address. It then turns to issues in contemporary bioethics, demonstrating how the debate is rooted in conflicting visions of the nature of medicine (and so human existence). This leads to a discussion of some of the philosophical and theological resources currently available for those who would reflect 'Christianly' on medicine. The heart of the book consists of an articulation of a Christian understanding of medicine as both a scholarly and a social practice, articulating the philosophical-theological framework which informs this perspective. It fleshes out features of medicine as an inherently moral practice, one informed by a Christian social vision and shaped by key theological commitments. The book closes by returning to the issues relating to the context of medicine and bioethics with which it opened, demonstrating how a Christian philosophical-theology of medicine informs and enriches those discussions.

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