

**Reading Questions: Locke, *Letter on Toleration*, *Second Treatise on Government*
Chs. 1-6**

1. What is the business of true religion according to Locke? What does this have to do with toleration?
2. What must we know if we are to stop people from using “pretense” of fidelity to a prince or to religion to justify imposing their will on others?
3. How does Locke’s account of the purposes of the state compare with that of Luther?
4. Is there any way to know which of two rival churches is orthodox and which heretical? Why or why not? What, if anything, does Locke’s answer suggest about our ability to learn religious truth?
5. How do we become members of a church? What is the implication of this for the power that a church has over its members?
6. Does the legitimate scope of authority of a church or state differ depending on where it is or who heads it? Is a Christian commonwealth fundamentally different from a non-Christian one?
7. Why can’t we trust the magistrate (that is, the state) to choose our religion? Why shouldn’t the magistrate have the authority to prescribe specific rites or ceremonies?
8. Who does Locke exclude from toleration? Why does he do so? What do these exceptions tell us about the possible limits of toleration?
9. How does Locke characterize the state of nature? What is the basis of equality? What is the extent of liberty? What is the law of nature like? Who has “executive power” in the state of nature? How does Locke’s account compare with Hobbes’s?
10. Do slaves owe obedience to their masters according to Locke? Why or why not? What role does God play in this argument?
11. How does one acquire legitimate title to property (i.e. ownership), according to Locke? Does acquiring the right of property require the existence of the state?
12. Does Locke think political power is like paternal power? Why or why not?