Before commenting on how the Christian Salvation History personally applies to my life, I should first describe what Salvation means to me, or more precisely, the sort of salvation that seems sensible to me. In my estimation, the ideal form of salvation is close to what the professor Dominic Colonna describes in his essay “The Trinity and Salvation” as published in *Sacred Adventure: Beginning Theological Study*. Here, Colonna relates salvation to the individual as a process of growing closer to God in all dimensions of your life. He paints an image of salvation that is a sort of self-transcendence (p. 46); I like that idea, and I think salvation to me is especially characterized by developing the ability to care for and love people outside of your own concern. It is this universal obligation to love others and spread love that I think is most God-like and most desirable.

In the vein of obligation to those you love, the first lesson of salvation is the idea of the Covenant between man and God. Most salient is the the story of Moses. I admire Moses because he embodies the wise leader. He is a faithful and smart man who answers the call of God and serves the needs of his people. After completing his mission and displaying commitment to God and his people, he helps to establish the law and lead his people.

Living by a code is an idea which really resonates with me. This is why the laws and codes brought by Moses are meaningful in my life. As the Judaism 101 pamphlet from class notes: “Are these laws sometimes inconvenient? Yes, of course. But if someone you care about -- your parent, your child, your spouse -- asked you to do something inconvenient or unpleasant, something you didn't feel like doing, you would do it, wouldn't you? (p. 5)” The Covenant he makes between God and His people, (a covenant which is broken before it is sealed, which is then reestablished through grace) is exemplary of the sort of responsibility and love between parent and child and is a model towards which to aspire.

Another point of Salvation meaningful to me is the Jesus as portrayed in the New Testament Gospels. Many Christians would consider this *the* item of Salvation History. Here is the purported ideal of Godliness on Earth. We see a man who is learned, kind, loving, wise, and holy. We also see a man frustrated with the state of things. Virginia Smith, in her essay “The Four Faces of Jesus” points out that each gospel illuminates a different facet of the man called King of the Jews. With her help I was better able to see the compassion drawn by Luke and the Unadulterated Christ of John, but I was most intrigued by the human sides that are more readily seen in the first two Gospels.

Here is a man on a mission and a man of the people, for the people, including all people (if sometimes a little gruff about it.) I admire Christ. He is compassion, love, and kindness – though he may seem rude at times. In fact, it is this rudeness and visible frustration that I most relate to. That he could be caring and compassionate while still being unafraid to lambast a person who was out of line, as in Matthew 16:23, to the Apostle Peter, “Get behind me, Satan!” (NRSV). I like to think this kind of concerned compassion suits me and my potential to be loving to all I come across.

Penultimate of my significant salvation lessons is Jesus Christ the Universal Savior, Jew and Gentile alike. Paul knows that all sin and fall short of the Glory of God (Matthew 3:23). To the Christian church (and perhaps the western world) Romans may indeed be the most important letter ever written. The professor John Knox asserts that it is unquestionably so in his quote in the thought-collection “The Influence of Paul’s Letter to the Romans throughout Christian Church History.”

I think that Paul’s letter to the Roman’s is undeniably touching. His portrait of the human condition is a reminder to me that we all face similar trials and tests of faith (and of code) and we always have found those challenges difficult. That the love of God through Christ’s path is all accepting is a prime example of the salvation that would benefit each person. After demonstrating that we are all weak and in need of salvation, Paul ends Romans with a message of universal acceptance in chapter 14. The verses trend surprisingly liberal with peaks like verse 14, “nothing is unclean in itself; but is unclean for anyone who thinks it is unclean” (NRSV). And that relativist outlook seems necessary for universal love.

God as Trinity. Obviously (at least judging from the amount of time spent explaining it) the three part Godhead is one of the more intangible concepts in the Christian Religion today. Dominic Colonna takes his turn at it in “The Trinity and Salvation,” wherein he puts on display the munificence of the Lord as both the One with whom we make our covenant and the supplier of the means to satisfy it. The lord as Father defines what is right. The Lord Christ gives the Path. The Spirit fortifies us to walk it. It is only by seeking salvation in God that we find it.

I would say that the Holy Triune to me provides a compartmentalized way to digest a religion. It is convenient to think of it as a set of theological trifocals (at the risk of sounding crude). Indeed, religion is at once a set of laws, passion and faith, and a source of joy and power. Here, I feel we face a human manufacture common when attempting to grasp the inconceivable. I see the value in all three, and is is nice to now have a better lens to identify the spiritual pieces in my world.