

Constructive Theology 1
TH500 (TH100)
Tuesdays 9-12
Room 300

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Purpose:

The purpose of this course is to further critical understanding and appropriation of major Christian doctrines in the context of the contemporary church and in loving engagement with the world. It treats principally central themes of Christian doctrinal reflection (e.g., revelation, scripture, Trinity, creation, sin, Christ, reconciliation, Holy Spirit, church and hope) as well as contemporary critiques and reformulations of the faith in the light of the ordered and sanctified components of Christian theological expression (Scripture, tradition, experience and reason).

Competence Objectives:

In completing this course a student will be able to:

- (1) Describe and relate central doctrinal themes of the Church universal.
- (2) Differentiate between some major streams of Christian theological reflection.
- (3) Deploy doctrinal language to interpret, construct, challenge and reform.

Format:

This class meets once a week for three hours for eleven weeks. The primary format will be lecture followed by discussion of questions raised on the basis of the student's close reading of required texts.

Expectations/Evaluation:

- (1) Class attendance and preparation of all required reading before class.
- (2) A one page exploration of some aspect of the reading that might serve in a reforming capacity for church life and practice in this place and time **or** a one page critical review of some aspect of the reading that you found either unfaithful to the Tradition and/or irrelevant for contemporary challenges. Please divide your explorations between the appreciative and critical over the course of the semester. **The page will be handed in at the end of the class for which it is**

due. The page will be evaluated based on fairness to the author(s), cogency of presentation and critical-imaginative potential.

- (3) A paraphrase of the Apostles' Creed of five to six pages in length. This paraphrase should work at unpacking the content of the creed, as though you were doing so in the context of an adult study group. It should draw on readings and class material; a bibliography of at least five resources should be included. **Deadline: April 9.**
- (4) A creed of your own that summarizes in five pages what you believe about **five** of the major themes of the content of the course. Students can include methods and sources of theological reflection as one theme. Students will not be evaluated on the "correctness" of their expressions, but on the lucid, careful and consistent articulation of the elements of their "creed" as a work in progress. A bibliography of at least five resources should be included. **Deadline: April 9**

Required Texts/Readings: (can be purchased at the UBC bookstore)

Migliore, Daniel L. *Faith Seeking Understanding: An Introduction to Christian Theology*. 2nd Edition. Eerdmans, 2004.

Sölle, Dorothee. *Thinking About God: An Introduction to Theology*. Trinity International Press, 1990.

A course pack containing all the readings for the course is also available at the UBC bookstore.

Course Schedule/Readings:

January 4: **The Task of Theology**
FSU, pp. 1-19; TAG, pp. 1-6
MacIntosh, Mark. *Divine Teaching: An Introduction to Christian Theology*. Blackwell, 2008, pp. ix-30.

January 12: **The Meaning of Revelation**
FSU, pp. 20-43, 354-369; TAG, pp. 7-21.
Dulles, Avery, S.J. *Models of Revelation*. Doubleday, 1985, pp. 19-35.

January 19: **The Authority and Interpretation of Scripture**
FSU, pp. 44-63; TAG, pp. 22-41.
Davis, Ellen F. "The Soil that is Scripture," pp. 36-44. *Engaging Biblical Authority: Perspectives on the Bible as Scripture*. Edited by William P. Brown. Westminster/John Knox, 2007.

Hayes, Richard B. "Reading Scripture in the Light of the Resurrection," pp. 216-238. *The Art of Reading Scripture*. Edited by Ellen F. Davis and Richard Hayes. Eerdmans, 2003.

Jones, Serene. "Inhabiting Scripture, Dreaming Bible," pp. 73-80. *Engaging Biblical Authority: Perspectives on the Bible as Scripture*. Edited by William P. Brown. Westminster/John Knox, 2007.

January 26: **The Triune God**

FSU, 64-91.

Bonino, José Miguez. *Room to Be People: An Interpretation of the Message of the Bible for Today's World*. Translated by Vickie Leach.

Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979, pp. 9-25.

McGrath, Alister. *Theology: The Basic Readings*. Blackwell, 2008, 27-45.

February 2: **The Good Creation**

FSU, pp. 92-116; TAG, pp. 42-53.

McFague, Sallie. *The Body of God: An Ecological Theology*. Fortress Press, 1993, pp. 131-158.

Wirzba, Norman, *The Paradise of God: Renewing Religion in an Ecological Age*. Oxford University Press, 2003, pp. 23-59.

February 9: **Providence and the Mystery of Evil/**

FSU, pp. 117-138; TAG, pp. 54-67.

Heidelberg Catechism, Qs. 26-27 (this catechism is easily found online)

Brunner, Emil. *The Christian Doctrine of Creation and Redemption*.

Dogmatics, Volume 2. Translated by Olive Wyon. London, 1952, pp. 170-185.

Humanity as Creation and New Creation

FSU, pp. 139-162; TAG, pp. 68-76.

February 15-26: Olympic Reading Week(s)

March 2: **The Person and Work of Christ**

FSU, pp. 163-196; TAG, pp. 102-135.

Carr, Anne E. *Transforming Grace: Christian Tradition and Women's Experience*. New York, 1988, pp. 158-179.

March 9: **Christ, Context and Religious Pluralism**

FSU, pp. 197-222, 301-329; TAG, pp. 77-101.

- March 16: **The Holy Spirit and the Christian Life**
 FSU, pp. 223-247, 384-401; TAG, pp. 154-170.
- March 23: **Church, Proclamation, Ministry and Sacraments**
 FSU, pp. 248-300; TAG, pp. 136-153.
 Willimon, William. *Pastor: The Theology and Practice of Ordained Ministry*.
 Nashville: Abingdon, 2002, pp. 55-74.
- March 30: **Hope: For this World and the Next**
 FSU, pp. 330-353.
 Barth, Karl. *Dogmatics in Outline*. Translated by G.T. Thomson. London,
 1949, pp. 129-136, 153-155
 Gutierrez, Gustavo. *A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics, and Salvation*.
 New York: Orbis, 1988, pp. 121-140.
 Suchocki, Marjorie H. *God, Christ, Church: A Practical Guide to Process
 Theology*. New York, 1984, pp. 163-210.

Select Bibliography:

Reference Works:

- Audi, Robert. General Editor. *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*. 2nd Edition.
 Cambridge University Press, 1999.
- Bowden, John and Richardson, Alan. Editors. *Westminster Dictionary of Christian
 Theology*. 2nd Edition. Westminster/John Knox, 2003
- McKim, Donald K. Editor. *Encyclopaedia of the Reformed Faith*. Louisville:
 Westminster/John Knox, 1992.
- _____. *Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms*. Louisville: Westminster/John
 Knox, 1996. (*This is an especially good resource since it provides short two or
 three sentence [not article length] definitions for theological terms).
- Webster, John B., Tanner, Kathryn and Torrance, Ian. *The Oxford Handbook of Systematic
 Theology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Introductions, Thematic and General Works in Theology:

- Augustine. *On Christian Doctrine*. Translated with an introduction by D.W. Robertson,
 Jr. New York: Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1958.
- *Barth, Karl. *Dogmatics in Outline*. Translated by G.T. Thomson. London: SCM Press,
 1949.

- _____. *Evangelical Theology: An Introduction*. Translated by Grover Foley. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1963, pp. 63-73.
- *Brunner, Emil. *The Christian Doctrine of Creation and Redemption. Dogmatics, Volume 2*. Translated by Olive Wyon. London, 1952.
- *Bonino, José Miguez. *Room to Be People: An Interpretation of the Message of the Bible for Today's World*. Translated by Vickie Leach. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979, pp. 9-25 ("Only An Atheist Can be a Good Christian").
- Brown, Robert McAfee. *Unexpected News: Reading the Bible with Third World Eyes*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984.
- *Carr, Anne E. *Transforming Grace: Christian Tradition and Women's Experience*. New York: Harper and Row, 1988, pp 180-200.
- *Davis, Ellen F. "The Soil that is Scripture," pp. 36-44. *Engaging Biblical Authority: Perspectives on the Bible as Scripture*. Edited by William P. Brown. Westminster/John Knox, 2007.
- *Dulles, Avery, S.J. *Models of Revelation*. New York: Doubleday, 1985.
- Coakley, Sarah. "Waiting for God – Feminist Christians and Contemplation." *Christian Century*, June 28, 2003.
- Ford, David F. *Theology: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford, 1999.
- Frei, Hans. *Types of Christian Theology*. Edited by George Hunsinger and William Placher. Yale University Press, 1992.
- Guthrie, Shirley. *Christian Doctrine*. Revised Edition. Westminster/John Knox, 1994.
- _____. Gutierrez, Gustavo. *A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics, and Salvation*. New York: Orbis, 1988.
- *Gutierrez, Gustavo. *A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics, and Salvation*. New York: Orbis, 1988
- _____. *The Power of the Poor in History*. Eugene, Oregon: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2004.
- *Hayes, Richard B. "Reading Scripture in the Light of the Resurrection," pp. 216-238. *The Art of Reading Scripture*. Edited by Ellen F. Davis and Richard Hayes. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003.
- Hooker, Morna D. "Chalcedon and the New Testament." *The Making and Remaking of Christian Doctrine*. Edited by Sarah Coakley and David Pailin. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993.
- Jenson, Robert W. "Scripture's Authority in the Church," pp. 27-37. *The Art of Reading Scripture*. Edited by Ellen F. Davis and Richard Hayes. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003.
- Johnson, Elizabeth A. *She Who Is: The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse*. New York: Crossroads, 1992.
- Johnson, Luke Timothy. *The Creed: What Christians Believe and Why it Matters*. New York: Doubleday, 2003.

- *Jones, Serene. "Inhabiting Scripture, Dreaming Bible," pp. 73-80. *Engaging Biblical Authority: Perspectives on the Bible as Scripture*. Edited by William P. Brown. Westminster/John Knox, 2007.
- Leith, John H. *Basic Christian Doctrine*. Westminster/John Knox, 1993.
- Lochman, Jan M. *The Faith We Confess: An Ecumenical Dogmatics*. Translated by David Lewis. Reprint. Eugene, Oregon: Wopf and Stock, 2005.
- *McFague, Sallie. *The Body of God: An Ecological Theology*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993.
- McGrath, Alister E. *Theology: The Basics* 2nd Edition. Oxford: Blackwell, 2008.
- *_____. Editor. *Theology: The Basic Readings*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2008.
- *McIntosh, Mark A. *Divine Teaching: An Introduction to Christian Theology*. Blackwell, 2008.
- Marks, Darren C. *Shaping a Theological Mind: Theological Context and Methodology*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002.
- Ogden, Schubert M. *Faith and Freedom: Toward a Theology of Liberation*. Revised and Enlarged Edition. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1989.
- Placher, William C. *Jesus the Savior: The Meaning of Jesus Christ for Christian Faith*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 2001, pp. 166-181, 188-198.
- Placher, William C. *The Triune God: An Essay in Postliberal Theology*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 2007.
- Reuther, Rosemary Radford. *Introducing Redemption in Christian Feminism*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998.
- Schillebeeckx, Edward. *On Christian Faith: The Spiritual, Ethical, and Political Dimensions*. Translated by John Bowden. New York: Crossroads Publishing, 1987.
- *Suchocki, Marjorie H. *God, Christ, Church: A Practical Guide to Process Theology*. New York: Crossroad, 1984.
- Thielicke, Helmut. *I Believe: The Christian's Creed*. Translated by John W. Doberstein and H. George Anderson. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1968.
- Williams, Rowan. *Tokens of Trust: An Introduction to Christian Belief*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 2007.
- *Willimon, William. *Pastor: The Theology and Practice of Ordained Ministry*. Nashville: Abingdon, 2002, pp. 55-74.
- *Wirzba, Norman, *The Paradise of God: Renewing Religion in an Ecological Age*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003, pp. 23-59.