TH 605 Systematic Theology II
Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary Boston Campus (CUME)
GCTS-Boston(CUME)Bldg. Fall, 2012: 9/11-10/16
Rev. Dr. William David Spencer and Athanasius Teaching Scholars in Theology

*Professor strongly recommends starred items be done before class

CLASS 1: SEPTEMBER 11: 6:00 pm to 10:00 pm

TOPIC: Introduction to Theology II: Tough Questions for Tough Christians
Review of Syllabus
  1) Student Review and Discussion of Information Learned in Theology I
  2) Jesus as Prophet, Priest and King

*REQUIRED READING: Warfield, PERSON AND WORK OF CHRIST (especially chapters 1-4, 9, 12, 14); Erickson, CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY chapter 37 (pp. 779-797).

FIRST PAPER ASSIGNMENT: "WHO IS JESUS" (See attached assignment page). Draft due next class for those choosing to rewrite for a higher grade, OR draft due at the last class for those NOT choosing to rewrite.

CLASS 2: SEPTEMBER 18: 6:00 to 10:00 pm

TOPIC: Jesus As Prophet, Priest, King (conclusion)
  1. Jesus as Creator
  2. General and Specific Revelation: Science and the Bible:
     What are the issues?
        a) Theories of Creation
        b) Creation, Evolution, Intelligent Design
        c) The Image of God in Humanity as a Key Theological Concern in Considering Theories of Human Origin

*REQUIRED READING: Moreland & Reynolds, THREE VIEWS ON CREATION AND EVOLUTION, Dembski, INTELLIGENT DESIGN; Erickson, chapter 18 (391-411), chapter 24 (pp. 517-536).

RECOMMENDED READING: Bube, Putting It All Together; Fischer, God Did It, But How? ; Dembski, The Design Inference

ASSIGNMENT: Hand in first draft of "WHO IS JESUS" short paper. All submissions MUST be accompanied by a cover sheet (see attached copy).

CLASS 3: SEPTEMBER 25: 6:00 to 10:00 pm

TOPIC: God's Work in Creation (Continued)
  1) Created and Fallen Humanity & the Salvific Plan of God
  2) Jesus as Redeemer and the Atonement.
  3) Calvin & Arminius: Calvinism & Arminianism

*REQUIRED READING: Erickson, chapters 43-44 (pp. 401-440); Dieter, et al, FIVE VIEWS OF SANCTIFICATION, 7-148. (Please note: Erickson’s discussion outlines the issues, FIVE VIEWS explains the positions.)

ASSIGNMENT: SECOND PAPER (see attached assignment page), "CORRECTION OF ERRONEOUS VIEW OF PERSON AND WORK OF CHRIST," due if you intend to rewrite. Please remember: You MUST include the appropriate cover sheet.
CLASS 4: October 2: 6:00 to 10:00 pm

TOPIC: God's Work in Providence (Continued)

REQUIRED READING: Complete all Reading Assignments


EXTRA DAY: STUDENT INTERVIEWS: MONDAY, OCTOBER 8 at CUME OFFICE.
Please check with instructors for sign up sheets with time slots. Please note: sign up to meet with whomever is working with you on your paper. Each student has the opportunity to meet individually with instructors to discuss papers and any issues related to the course. Hamilton students and CUME students coming from the north should sign up to meet with Dr. Spencer that morning at Dr. Aida Spencer's office in the basement of the library on the Hamilton campus. Those from Boston or coming in from the South should sign up with Dr. Spencer or an associate to meet at the CUME building. Students traveling a long distance or with a class Monday night or other such conflict should see Dr. Spencer or one of the teaching associates to schedule a meeting by telephone or before or after the next evening's class. While not mandatory, these interviews are very helpful to move you forward on your papers or discuss any theological topic that puzzles you.

CLASS 5: OCTOBER 9: 6:00 to 10:00 pm

TOPIC: God's Work in Providence (Continued)

REQUIRED READING: Beilby & Eddy, eds., DIVINE FOREKOWLEDGE, Especially Chapters 1,2,4 (but try to read entire book, if possible).

WRITING ASSIGNMENT: Complete all final drafts to be handed in next class.

CLASS 6: OCTOBER 16: 6:00 to 10:00 pm

TOPIC: Is God the Author of Evil?

CLASS EXERCISE: Doing Theology -- applying what we learned in the course to the debate on the Openness of God. Is the "Openness of God" teaching the correct understanding of Biblical Truth, an Interpretive Option for Arminian Christians, or a Heretical Position that All Orthodox Christians Need to Avoid?

CLASS EVALUATIONS

ASSIGNMENT: ALL PAPERS ARE DUE TONIGHT: Both first versions and final rewrites. No first submission papers accepted without Registrar's approval. No resubmissions for higher grade accepted under any circumstances after tonight.
Course Description: According to the catalog: "Learning focuses on God's work in creation and providence, humanity as created and fallen, and the person and work of Christ."

The course fulfills the various program degree goals in a number of ways. While it does not require knowledge of biblical languages, it does encourage students who have these to use them in doing their work, and class lectures provide insights to all students from the original scriptural texts, fulfilling Master of Divinity goal #1. Also addressed is alternate goal #1, as well as goals 2 and 3, in all the Masters degree programs as the presentation of systematic theology is grounded in careful exposition of key texts. Goals 4-8 for all the Masters programs are fulfilled as the class lectures apply the information being learned to each program’s interests as they arise. Topics covered relate also both to students’ spiritual growth and local and global ministry. Diploma students are introduced to an overview of these key theological issues: how to think theologically, choose sources, adopt theological and exegetical methods of approach, and such specific topics as the person and work of Jesus Christ, God’s work in creation, which includes a theological exploration of the creation/evolution debate, God’s work in providence, including a theological analysis of the Calvinism/Arminianism debate, ending with an exploration of the problem of evil, and a hands-on, practical class discussion of issues involved in the Openness of God debate.

Measurable goals that address the "Statement of Mission" include a 1st paper assignment (in conjunction with 2 classes of data) that "encourages students to become knowledgeable in God's inerrant word and competent in its interpretation" (Article 1), by having students use the Bible to explore 5 aspects of Jesus' person and work. The gathered data is then applied in the 2nd paper assignment to a specific errant viewpoint, as a means to "train" "students" to become "skilled" in applying what they learn directly to "ministry" (Article 3). Grading is done on a carefully calibrated system, based on my years as teaching coordinator in adult education for Louisville/Jefferson County, Kentucky, which guides students through several redoings of written work to master the content (Article 2). Finally, the content of the remaining classes widens students’ understanding of classic to contemporary theology, applied to one's own personal growth and communal life of faith (Article 4), larger worldview (Article 5), and locally and globally oriented praxis (Article 6).

Student Academic and Moral Requirements: Gordon-Conwell’s “Spiritual Growth” Statement explains: “As a community of believers, our first desire at Gordon-Conwell is to worship and engage with God, both corporately and individually. We believe that academic learning divorced from a life of biblical spirituality and holiness neither honors God nor serves His people. Working with the local church, our goal is to grow our students so that their experiential knowledge of God in Christ is evidenced in their character, outlook, conduct, relationship and involvement in society.” The Semlink plagiarism statement adds, “The Seminary considers all breaches of personal and academic integrity to be serious offenses. As such, the Seminary has a zero tolerance for such behavior.” This policy extends to academic issues, such as cheating (e.g. by bringing in unauthorized sources into exams), plagiarism (i.e. passing another’s words off as one’s own, including copying other student(s)’s work, or taking words or ideas from other sources without citation, quotation marks, or other indications), submitting the same work for two different courses without the professors’ knowledge. GCTS-Boston (CUME)’s “Community Life Statement” also renounces “greed, jealousy, false pride, lust, bitterness, hostility, an unforgiving spirit and prejudice such as that based on race, sex, and academic or socio-economic status,” and “renounces” moral breaches and “behaviors such as distortion of God’s Word, deception, falsehood, drunkenness [or use of illegal drugs or abuse of prescription drugs], stealing, and sexual immorality such as premarital intercourse, adultery and homosexual behavior,” committing domestic violence, breaking civil laws, promoting slander against the character of others and infringements against the rights of others and other such behavior
unbecoming a Christian leader. All of these are grounds for penalties, including dismissal. Instead, CUME’s statement counsels, “We will seek to practice an attitude of mutual submission according to the mind of Christ, recognizing that at times our personal rights and preferences must be put aside for the sake of others’ conscience and the good of the community.” Our goal is to serve God by becoming more Christ-like, and so, “we will seek to encourage the cultivation of such spiritual attitudes as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.”

Required Textbooks: according to their appearance in the syllabus:

1. Warfield, B.B. The Person and Work of Christ (Philadelphia, PA: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1970), ISBN 978-0875-5252-97. Please note: For this book, prices range from $7 used to $17.42 new to $124.08 new - all on its Amazon listing alone - not to mention copies available on eBay, from its own publisher, and from a score of bookstores. The same pricing range is true for all our required titles; so, shop around and buy wisely. Any edition of these required books will be acceptable for this class.


Recommended Books: according to their appearance in the syllabus:

Bube, Richard H. Putting It All Together: Seven Patterns for Relating Science and the Christian Faith.

Fischer, Robert B. God Did It, But How?

Dembski, William. The Design Inference.

Calvin, John. Institutes of the Christian Religion

Arminius, James. The Writings of Arminius, translation by Nichols, Bagnall.


Pinnock, Clark, ed. The Openness of God.

Boyd, Gregory A. God of the Possible.

Erickson, Millard J. God the Father Almighty.

Grading: "Who is Jesus?" paper 1/3

Longer paper on erroneous teaching 2/3

Since reading is imperative for understanding these complex issues your grade will raise or lower according to how faithfully you have been reading all the assignments. Students are also expected to employ what is being learned directly to ministry and the professor hopes that class written assignments as well as discussions will reflect this enrichment. Please Note: DO NOT ATTEMPT TO EMAIL PAPERS TO DR. SPENCER. HARD COPIES ONLY MAY BE HANDED IN AT CLASS, OR SENT BY SNAIL MAIL, OR HAND DELIVERED TO HIS HOME ADDRESS: 10 MAPLE STREET, SOUTH HAMILTON, MA 01981. All papers must be doublespaced in size 12 font with at least one inch margins so that we may write helpful comments. Students may select the instructor they wish to grade their paper by writing that instructor’s name on the cover sheet. Please note: With your first draft you must submit the appropriate cover sheet, and, with your redoing (2nd, 3rd, 4th draft), you must submit the previously corrected and returned earlier draft and instructor-marked cover sheet for us to accept and regrade your work. We will be checking only for your improvements according to our comments on your earlier draft. (Please also note: Hamilton students or CUME students living in the north should choose Dr. Spencer so they can meet with him on the Hamilton campus.)
Office Hours:

You may reach Dr. Spencer by telephone M T W TH between 12:00-1:00 p.m. and M W TH 6:00 – 6:30 p.m. at 978-468-4318. If you cannot make those times, please leave your number and suggested times he might call you back. Please note: Dr. Spencer’s answer phone has trouble with weak signal cell phones, so, if it disconnects while you are leaving your message, please call again and leave your telephone number. He will also try to arrive on Tuesday evenings about 5:15 to eat with students in the student lounge. You can schedule to talk with him at that time in person and as he sets up the classroom, in addition, of course, to the interview night, which is devoted to one to one student-instructor meetings. The Athanasian Scholars will tell the class the best time to telephone him or whether email contact is more effective. Telephone is best with Dr. Spencer, as his email is over-full and your message will be lost.

May God bless you and your ministry and fill you with knowledge and wisdom

FIRST PAPER ASSIGNMENT
Systematic Theology II
Dr. William David Spencer
GCTS -- BOSTON -- CUME

WHO IS JESUS?

Draw material from the following sources:
  * The Bible
  * The Nicaean Creed
  * The Chalcedonian Definition of the Faith
  * Erickson or Calvin's Systematic Theology
  * Your own theological library

Remember all Bible verses must be explained and properly cited in your text.

Write one 3 (three) to 5 (five) paged, double spaced, at least 12 font, 1 inch margined paper: Who is Jesus?
  1. Discuss Jesus as God.
  2. Discuss Jesus as human.
  3. Discuss Jesus' divine and human attributes and discuss how they limit or enhance each other.
  4. Discuss Jesus' role in human redemption.
  5. In a final paragraph, discuss Jesus' greatest impact on your life.

Think before you write. Do NOT go over 5 (five) pages. Be succinct. Make every word count. Support all doctrinal claims with appropriately cited verses.

Draft is due on our second night of class for those choosing to rewrite for a higher grade. Final paper is due on the last night of class for those NOT choosing to rewrite and for all rewritten papers.

All papers submitted, both drafts and rewrites, MUST be accompanied by cover sheets (two of them are enclosed). You must include former corrected drafts and critiqued cover sheets with all resubmissions.
Please note: Save a copy of all drafts for your files in the event a draft is lost while traveling.

Please attach this cover sheet to submission, return with resubmission.

TELEPHONE # _____________________
GRADE: _________________________

The following items are rated according to the following symbols: Y=yes S=sometimes/somewhat N=no I=ineadquate; A=adequate G=good S=superior

METHODOLOGY
Conclusions proved I A G S
Exhaustive/comprehensive I A G S
Accurate I A G S
Insightful I A G S
All statements are supported with proof I A G S
All quotations are discussed I A G S

COMPLETENESS OF STUDY
Study Explores Person & Work of Christ N S Y
Jesus As God Is Discussed N S Y
Jesus' As Human Is Discussed N S Y
Jesus' Divine and Human Attributes Are Discussed N S Y
Do You Provide 1 Example of How Jesus' Divine Attributes Enhance His Human Ones? N S Y
Do You Provide 1 Example of How Jesus' Human Attributes Limit His Divine Ones? N S Y
Do You Discuss Jesus' Role in Human Redemption? N S Y
Do You Tell us Jesus’ Greatest Impact on Your Life? N S Y
Use of Bible for Gathering Data N S Y
Use of Nicaean Creed N S Y
Use of Chalcedonian Definition N S Y
Use of Class Theology Texts N S Y

Bibliography and Notes

WRITTEN PRESENTATION
Well-organized paper N S Y
Introductory paragraph N S Y
Thesis statement N S Y
includes scope of study N S Y
Body N S Y
Summary N S Y
Conclusion N S Y
SECOND PAPER ASSIGNMENT

Systematic Theology II
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Write a six (6) to eight (8) page paper applying the findings of your first paper to a heterodox teaching about Jesus’ person and work.

The point of the assignment is to explore the interrelation of the person and work of Christ by applying the orthodox view of Jesus’ person and work that you summarized in your first paper as a corrective to a group, book, or popular erroneous teaching that obviously errs in its view of Christ's person or work.

a) If the first error you noticed in it is with Christ's person, show where it consequently errs in its view of his work of salvation.

b) If you first noticed it has a faulty view of Christ's work, show where its view of Christ's person is also affected.

Step 1: Page One (1): Introductory paragraph with thesis and scope (overview) of the points your paper will develop.

Step 2: Pages One (1) through Three (3): Present a brief summary of Jesus' person and work from the Bible, creeds, and required as well as recommended texts from Systematic Theology I and II. Develop that summary from your first paper (do not merely copy your first paper).

Step 3: Pages Four (4) and Five (5): Introduce the group, book, erroneous teaching, or issue you selected from primary source quotations. Warning: Do not give us your unsupported opinion. Instead, quote from actual believers (adherents) of this religion. Look for data in books, news articles, websites on the net, interviews from cult members conducted by you or others, etc.

Step 4: Pages Six (6) through Eight (8): Now, analyze the heresy by applying the orthodox doctrine of Jesus' person/work to expose and correct the heretical views under consideration.


Endnotes: Be consistent with proper citations. Use Chicago Manual of Style, Turabian, Slade, or a similar style book. These books are available on our reserve shelf in the Jackson Library at CUME. They are also available in any college or public library. Check with the Reference Librarian if you are uncertain.

First Draft is due at the third class for those choosing to rewrite for higher grade.

Final Drafts are due at the fifth class. Grace period for all work is the final class.
Please Remember: You must resubmit your earlier corrected draft and cover sheet with all redoings. Redoings cannot be accepted without previous draft and cover sheet.

Attach this cover sheet to your draft. Return it & corrected draft w. redoing.
Paper: Theology II NAME: __________________________
TELEPHONE: ___________________________ GRADE: ________________
Name of instructor grading __________________________

The following items are rated according to the following symbols: Y=yes
S=sometimes/somewhat N=no I=inadequate A=adequate G=good E = Excellent

METHODOLOGY
Conclusions proved  I A G E
Exhaustive/comprehensive  I A G E
Accurate  I A G E
Insightful  I A G E
Original  I A G E
Sources are primary and creative  I A G E

COMPLETENESS OF STUDY
Basis of study is Person & Work of Christ  N S Y
Use of Bible for gathering data  N S Y
Use of creeds  N S Y
Use of class theology texts  N S Y
Application to book, group, erroneous teaching  N S Y
Is your view introduced with primary source quotations?  N S Y
Do you analyze by applying Christ's Person/Work?  N S Y
Do you explain the orthodox position on Christology & Soteriology? NSY
Do you explain your group’s heterodox Christology & Soteriology? NSY
Do you show us through primary source quotations if Jesus is less than
fully God and fully human? N S Y
Do you identify if something is added to or substituted for salvation
in Jesus (i.e. Jesus Plus - what?)? N S Y
Do you compare and contrast the orthodox vs. heretical views? N S Y
Do you show us how a faulty view of Christ's person affects the view
of Christ's work or vice versa? N S Y
Did you include specific step by step recommendations for correcting
error? N S Y
Do your recommendations flow from your analysis? N S Y
Bibliography and notes  N S Y

WRITTEN PRESENTATION
Well-organized paper  N S Y
Introductory paragraph  N S Y
Thesis sentence  N S Y
includes scope of study  N S Y
Body  N S Y
Summary  N S Y
Conclusion  N S Y
Literary Style - clear and succinct  N S Y
Spelling and grammar correct  N S Y
Does student need remedial writing class?  N S Y
Print easy to read  N S Y
Bibliography cited  N S Y
Facts, quotations, ideas of others cited in notes  N S Y
Notes and bibliography consistent  N S Y

COMMENTS:

SAMPLE TOPICS
Jesus' Deity and the Jehovah's Witnesses' View of Christ's Person: What Do Witnesses Believe and How Does Their Belief About Jesus' Person Affect Their View of His Work and What People Need To Do To Be Saved?

Jesus' Humanity, Docetism, and the Christian Science View of Pain, Suffering, Illness, Death. What Should They Believe?

Jesus and the Rastafarian View of Illness and Death. What Does the Rasta Christ Need in Order to Cope with Aging/Dying?

The Jesus Seminar – Right or Wrong about Jesus? How Does Its Conclusions Affect One's View of Salvation?

Jesus-Only Teaching: Is It Enough For Salvation?

The New Age Jesus of (select a teacher, book, article from "Earth Star" etc.) – How Is Christ Presented and What Is Being Recommended For Eternal Wholeness (Salvation)? Is This Jesus and His Action Enough?

Matthew Fox's Jesus – Recognizable and Efficacious?

Doomsday Jesus – From The Doomsday Reader, Select a Cult and Examine the Person and Work in Its View of Jesus.

The Hindu Jesus – Enough for Salvation?


Why Don't Wiccans Allow Jesus as One of Their Higher Powers?

Erich Von Daniken's Jesus – Can E.T. Save? (Alternative, any UFO oriented cult.)

H. Spencer Lewis and the Rosicrucian Jesus – Divine & Salvific?


The Christ of The DaVinci Code: Orthodox or not?

The Gospel of Thomas: A Fresh View of Jesus We Should All Welcome and Accept?

The Jesus of Unity – Who Is He and Does He Do Enough?

Should the Mormon View of Jesus Christ Be Acceptable to Christians?

Mr. Moon and the Son: Unification's View of Christ – Is Jesus the Lord of the 2nd Advent? And, If Not, Who Is Jesus to Mr. Moon?

T.M. and J.C. – Any Connection?

Scientology and the Hollywood Christ – Portrayal or Betrayal?

Jesus and the Jews – Who Do They Say He Is Now?

Why and How Did The 7th Day Adventist View of Jesus Improve?

How Did the Worldwide Church of Christ Reassess Christ?

The Jesus of Liberal Christianity versus the Christ of Historic Orthodoxy: What Are the Differences? (Make certain you document your claims from specific sources.)
Eastern Lightning and the Christ of Grace versus the New Kingdom Christ: Is Zhen the Second Coming of Christ? If not, why not?

Who is Christ in Hinduism? What Are the Differences between Hindu and Christian Views of Jesus?

Christ and Buddah: Both Enlightened Teachers - or is Jesus more?

Who is buried in the “Jesus Family Tomb”? The Resurrection of Christ versus Simcha Jacobovici and Charles Pellegrino’s Ebionite Christ.