TH 504: Systematic Theology I
Spring Term 2013

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SYLLABUS

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will attempt to answer a number of foundational questions about the nature of theological method and apply those principles in reflecting upon the nature and attributes of God. What is the role of tradition in theology? Does Scripture need an interpretative principle, e.g., tradition, in order to properly function as authority? Is revelation propositional or transformational? Is the continuing work of the Spirit in the church revelatory? What is the place of imagination and creative reconstruction in Evangelical theology? Is classical theism too indebted to philosophy and metaphysics? What does a properly biblical understanding of a relational God as Trinity look like?

Note on pedagogy
Based upon my conviction that the best learning is collaborative each meeting will consist of both lectures as well as interaction. You will be expected to participate in class discussions, to make class presentations, to participate in group projects. In addition to this, the instructor will set up small group tutorials, both during class and during office hours, and during reading weeks. Groups no larger than 4 students will spend about 45 minutes in discussion with the instructor.

II. EVALUATION

A. Critical reading notes (or reading journal). Each student will provide me with the reading notes covering the required reading (see under Course Content). I do not require a minimum number of pages; however, the student should specify what percentage of the reading assignments he has done. Weighted at 25%. Due by last day of written work.

B. Class participation. 25% I will assess both your desire to learn, as well as the progress you are making.

1 The final version of this syllabus will be made available on the first day of class. All final changes will concern matters of detail.
C. **Fina exam (25%).** Exam will consist of essays on a number of topics chosen from a list of announced topics. Exam will be closed-book/open Bibles. The exam will last 3 hours.

A score must be obtained for each part of the evaluation (A, B, C above) in order to pass.

### III. COURSE CONTENT

**WEEK 1: BASIC QUESTIONS IN EVANGELICAL THEOLOGY**

Lints 29-57; 290-311. Grenz 1-13; Franke 1-44. Bray 9-52;

**WEEK 2: THE GREAT TRADITION**

Lints 81-139; Franke 83-165

**WEEK 3: REVELATION**

Lints 57-81, 259-290; Grenz 132-38.

**Reading week: Group discussion and tutorials**

**WEEK 4: RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE**

**WEEK 5: INSPIRATION AND ACCOMMODATION**

Erickson ch. 9; Grenz 379-404

**WEEK 6: EMERGENCE OF TRINITARIAN DOCTRINE**

Grenz 53-76; Bray 111-185

**WEEK 7: THE TRINITY IN THE WEST**

Lacugna

**WEEK 8: TRINITY, RELATIONALITY AND THE CRITIQUE OF METAPHYSICS**

Grenz 77-87; Bray 197-224; Franke 45-81;
WEEK 9: DIVINE ATTRIBUTES I

Boyd

WEEK 10: DIVINE ATTRIBUTES II

No reading

WEEK 11: DIVINE ATTRIBUTES III

No reading

FINAL EXAM

IV. REQUIRED TEXTS

- Bray, Gerald, *The Doctrine of God* (IVP, 2003, 9780830815319)
- The student must also read an additional 1,000 pages from books not previously read, either from the list of recommended texts below, or other suggested books (this needs to be approved by the instructor).

V. RECOMMENDED TEXTS

- Baillie, John, *The Idea of Revelation in Recent Thought* (Columbia, 1956)
- Berkhof, Hendrikus, *Two Hundred Years of Theology* (Eerdmans, 1989)
- Cunningham, David, *These Three Are One: The Practice of Trinitarian Theology* (Blackwell, 1998)
- Feinberg, John, *No One Like Him: The Doctrine of God* (Crossway, 2006)
- Frei, Hans W., *Types of Christian Theology* (Yale, 1992)
• Gunton, Colin, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology* (T&T Clark, 1991)
• Hüttner, Reinhard, *Suffering Divine Things: Theology as Church Practice* (Eerdmans, 2000)
• Kelsey, David, *The Uses of Scripture* (Fortress, 1975)
• Lindbeck, George, *The Nature of Doctrine* (WJK, 1984)
• Marshall, Bruce, *Trinity and Truth* (CUP, 2000)
• Nash, Ronald, *The Concept of God: An Exploration of Contemporary Difficulties with the Attributes of God* (Zondervan, 1983)
• Pannenberg, Wolfhart, *Basic Questions in Theology I* (SCM, 1970)
• Raschke, Carl, *The Next Reformation* (Baker, 2006)
• Rahner, Karl, *The Trinity* (Herder & Herder, 1975)
• Shults, LeRon, *Reforming the Doctrine of God* (Eerdmans, 2005)
• Tanner, Kathryn, *Jesus, Humanity, and the Trinity: A Brief Systematic Theology* (Fortress, 2001)
• Thiemann, Ronald, *Revelation and Theology: The Gospel as Narrated Promise* (Notre Dame, 1985)
• Webster, John, *Holy Scripture: A Dogmatic Sketch* (CUP, 2003)
• Zizioulas, John, *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church* (St. Vladimir’s, 1995)

VI. NOTE ON PLAGIARISM

Please refer to Indiana University’s ‘Plagiarism: What It is and How to Recognize and Avoid It’ [http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml]. The document has the official recognition of Gordon-Conwell faculty.

- If you are not sure about specific situations, contact the professor for clarification.
- Cases will be automatically referred to the plagiarism committee of GCTS.

VII. GRADING SCALE

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