Course description

Systematic Theology II discusses the following theological loci: creation, sin, Christology and the atoning work of Christ. While most of its concentration will be on the person and work of Christ, it will integrate these within the larger pattern of God’s work starting with creation.

The integrating motif of this particular class is the notion of the relation between God and the world. How might we conceived of the action of God in the world (creation, providence, divine presence in Christ) in light of the ontological distinction between God and creation?

Systematic Theology II has to walk a fine line between maintaining the ontological distinction and affirming that God remains personal. It also refuses to dissolve the paradox of divine providence and human freedom in either direction. God’s providential care for the world does not deny the reality of human causes, or a minimal human freedom.

Course objectives

The student will acquire a solid understanding of the historical development of these doctrines, their biblical foundations, and the critical issues associated with them. She will also be able to formulate an integrated understanding of the coherence and mutual relationship between these doctrines.

Students will acquire a sufficient conceptual sophistication, a conceptual framework to make sense of traditional theological loci.

Will gain the sense of mystery at the way in which human nature has been ordered; and a sense of gratitude at the way in which God saves us.

Should understand the links which exist between creation – Christology – atonement.

Should understand what is at stake in debates about atonement.

Should understand the continued significance of traditional Chalcedonian language about the person of Christ.

Evaluation

A. Report of completed reading. The student should specify what percentage of the reading assignments he has done. Weighted at 25%. Due by last day of written work.

B. Group project. Weighted at 25%. Each reading week groups will be formed which will address specific issues. Groups of no more than 4 students will meet during each reading week for two hours of conversation. Each student will then

1 The final version of this syllabus will be available the first day of class. All changes will concerns matters of detail.
write a reflection paper (min. 2500 words) which addresses the specific question assigned.

a. **Reading week 1**: Discuss the following statement: ‘The concept of hell as eternal conscious torment is incompatible with a God who ultimately triumphs over evil.’

b. **Reading week 2**: Discuss the following question: ‘Does the metaphysical language of Chalcedon continue to be of service to a global and missional church?’

C. **Sequence of Mid-term (25%) & Final exam (25%)**. You will have to respond to 2 essay questions (out of 3 choices). A list of all possible essay questions will be supplied at the beginning of class.

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**Course outline**

**Lecture 1**
*Creation*
Fergusson 1-77
Helm 69-93
Systematic Theology of choice: chapter on Creation

**Lecture 2**
*Providence, Free Will, and Evil*
Hughes 143-200
Fergusson 77-98
Helm 15-69; 93-193; 217-235
Systematic Theology of choice: chapter on Providence/Election

**Lecture 3**
*The Problem of Evil*
Hughes 77-107; Helm 193-217

**Reading Week**
**Group exercise: God and Evil**

**Lecture 4**
*Image of God*
Hughes 1-71
Systematic Theology of choice: Chapter on the Image of God in humanity

**Lecture 5**
*Sin*
Hughes 71-143
Augustine
Kelly 344-375
Systematic Theology of choice: chapter on Sin

Mid-term Exam ()

Lecture 6
Christology up to Nicaea
Kelly 3-29, 138-163
Hughes 237-317

Lecture 7
From Nicaea to Chalcedon
Kelly 223-344

Reading week
Group exercise: The continued significance of Chalcedonian Christology

Lecture 8
Models of Divine Presence in Christ
No readings

Lecture 9
The Work of Christ: Ransom and Satisfaction
Hughes 335-355
Kelly 163-189
Anselm, Cur Deus Homo (excerpt)
Aulen excerpt

Lecture 10
The Work of Christ: Penal Substitution and Moral Example
Ritschl excerpt
Schleiermacher excerpt
Schreiner excerpt

Final Exam ()

Required reading

Books
- Gerald Bray, God is Love: A Biblical and Systematic Theology (Crossway, 2012)
- J. N. D. Kelly, Early Christian Doctrines (Continuum, 2000)
- Walter A. Elwell, ed., Evangelical Dictionary of Theology (Baker, 2001)

Articles/Chapters
- Gustav Aulen, Christus Victor [excerpt] PDF to be provided via CAMS
- Thomas Schreiner, ‘Penal Substitution View’, in *The Nature of the Atonement: Four Views* – PDF to be provided via CAMS
- Friedrich Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith*, pp. 425-476. – PDF to be provided via CAMS

**Recommended reading**

- Hoekema, A., *Created in God’s Image*, Eerdmans
- Schmiechen, Peter, *Saving Power: Theories of Atonement and Forms of the Church* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005)
- Scot McKnight, *Jesus and His Death: Historiography, the Historical Jesus, and Atonement Theory* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2005)
• Finlan, Stephen, *Problems with Atonement: The Origins of, and Controversy About, the Atonement Doctrine* (Collegeville: Liturgical, 2005)