TH 606 — MODERN THEOLOGY
Instructor: Peter D. Anders
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COURSE SYLLABUS
Fall 2010
M 2:00–5:00

Office Hours
Mondays 6–7:30pm, Tuesdays 2:00–5:00pm, and Fridays 9–10:30am

Course Description
From the end of the Reformation period, representative figures and movements are studied in order to better understand current orientations to theology and to the theological task. Focus is on the development of Protestant theology in the context of modern European thought and culture; including Protestant Orthodoxy, Deism, Protestant Liberalism, and Neo-Orthodoxy.

Objectives

• Reflect on what it means to think theologically in an evangelical Christian context.

• Develop a solid foundational knowledge of the general flow of ideas, and the key issues, movements, individuals and texts in modern Protestant Christian theological history.

• Sharpen our perspective on the meaning, concerns, and significance of the modern period of western intellectual history; and the place, shape, and challenges of Evangelical theology as it developed through this time period, and as it seeks to define itself and its task in the current theological situation.

• Gain insight concerning the key theological orientations in Protestantism through an analysis of these theologians and theological movements; and reflect on ways the lessons learned may be applied to our own critical evaluation of contemporary theologies, and to our own faithful fulfillment of the contemporary theological task.

• Cultivate a deeper appreciation of our own theological heritage and place in the community of faith that transcends boundaries of time and location; and a clearer vision and intellectual context for a lifetime of theological study expressed in continuing personal growth, and well-informed ministry.

Required Texts


The following shorter readings posted on CAMS are also required (listed in order of reading):


Helpful Optional Texts


Requirements (Choose either OPTION #1 or OPTION #2)

OPTION #1: Final Exam

3,000-word max. You may use class notes and texts as you answer the questions, and you are encouraged to engage additional research. Simply number your answers to correspond to the terms/concepts on the exam. Answers to the take-home exam will be evaluated on: 1) thoroughness, conciseness, and clarity of thought; 2) demonstrated significant understanding of the key terms, concepts, and issues addressed in this class; and 3) the quality of writing and presentation.

PART 1 — Please choose EIGHT terms/concepts from the list below. Define each of the terms/concepts you have chosen, and discuss their relevance in Modern Theology. Be sure to include in your answers, where appropriate, discussions/explications of: key issues; related concepts; important representative theologians and/or philosophers; theologies and/or movements; and clear examples that will further demonstrate their meaning and importance. 10 points each.

1. Scholasticism
2. Formal principle of theology / Material principle of theology
3. The Counter-Renaissance
4. ‘broad, ugly ditch’
5. Jesus of history vs. Christ of faith
6. ‘turn to the subject’
7. evidentialism
8. religious a priori
9. Romanticism
10. Christology ‘from above’ vs. Christology ‘from below’
11. ‘feeling of absolute dependence’
12. Vorstellung / Begriff
13. thesis, antithesis, synthesis
14. ‘kernel’ vs. ‘husk’
15. The principle of subjectivity
16. Jesus vs. Socrates
17. Religion as alienation
18. ‘hermeneutics of suspicion’
19. ‘Death of God’
20. History of Religion School
21. Dialectical Theology
22. ‘point of contact’
23. ‘demythologization’

PART 2 — Please write a short response to the following: Reflecting on what you have learned about Modern Theology from the reading, lectures, and discussions, briefly discuss a key issue, doctrine, or theological/philosophical position or development that has surprised you, puzzled you, irritated you, changed or confirmed your own thinking, or has found a meaningful application in your own Christian life and/or ministry. 20 points
**OPTION #2: Research Paper**

3,500-word max. Researching a topic of interest to the student that is also clearly relevant to the subject of Modern Theology (please see the instructor if you would like suggestions for possible topics).

**NOTE:** All Research Paper topics must be approved by the instructor no later than November 15.

The Research Paper should demonstrate thoughtful engagement with both primary and secondary sources. These sources should be clearly identified in the footnotes or endnotes, and bibliography. Required course reading may be used for the research paper as well. Research papers will be evaluated on 1) thoroughness, conciseness, and clarity of thought; 2) demonstrated significant and thoughtful engagement with the chosen topic, and with the primary and secondary sources; and 3) the quality of writing and presentation.

The Final Exam/Research Paper is due December 21 by 4:00pm (December 10 for December graduates).

**OPTION #1 and OPTION #2 (Required of All Students):**

**Reaction Papers**

Five short papers (500-word max each) reacting to the required course texts. Each paper must be a response to the reading, rather than merely a summary or explication. Students should seek to analyze each text as a whole, reflecting especially on key themes, arguments, issues, criticisms, or significant points that are of particular personal interest; and on how these relate to the key themes discussed in the course. Students may use the following examples of general critical questions for the purpose of identifying and reflecting on the main theme(s) of the reading in light of the class lecture and discussion:

- What stood out to me? (Reflecting on interest)
- What surprised me? (Reflecting on distance)
- What puzzled me? (Reflecting on learning opportunities)
- What connections did I make? (Reflecting on integration)
- What implications are there? (Reflecting on application)

Each essay must respond to the required text that was due for the previous class session (these texts are marked in bold on the Course Outline and Schedule).

Reaction papers are due: week 3: Locke  
week 5: Kant  
week 7: Schleiermacher  
week 8: Harnack  
week 10: Barth

**Participation/Reading**

You are expected to be faithful to your calling as a student through preparation, attendance, and involvement in the course. Significant learning will take place in the context of the classroom community. Assigned reading outside of class is meant to supplement the lectures and discussions, and will provide a necessary aid for learning the material. Students with more than four absences will not pass the course. You will have an opportunity to account for your attendance and completed required reading by filling out and submitting the Completed Reading Form available on CAMS.

The Completed Reading Form is due December 21 by 4:00pm (December 10 for December graduates).
Additional Information Concerning Written Assignments

- Written assignments should be typed in 12 point, Times New Roman-type font, double spaced, 1 inch margins, and with a cover page that clearly states your campus mailbox number. Students should make consistent use of a style manual of their choice.

- The preferred means of submitting assignments is in hard copy at the beginning of class, in my campus mailbox (#223), or slipped under/deposited in the box in front of my office door (GL108). Please submit assignments as an email attachment only when absolutely necessary, and do not assume the instructor has received an emailed assignment until a verification is sent in response.

Final written work submitted on December 21 (December 10 for December graduates), should include a Final Exam or Research Paper, and a Completed Reading Form.

- Late assignments will be subject to a grade reduction penalty at the discretion of the instructor. It is the GCTS Registrar’s policy that no written work may be accepted by the professor after 4:00 pm on December 21 without an extension granted by the Registrar’s office.

Grading

The relative weight of the course requirements will be distributed as follows:

- OPTION #1 — Final Exam 50%
  OR  OPTION #2 — Research Paper

- Five Reaction Papers 30%

- Completed Reading Form 20%

Plagiarism

Helpful guidelines on plagiarism can be found on the Indiana University website listed below. This document has the official recognition of the Gordon-Conwell faculty and provides very helpful tools to guide you as you prepare your papers/exams. In order to save paper, we have provided you with the website address: http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/wts/plagiarism.html.

Personal Recorders and Computers

Recording of lectures is normally not permitted. Exceptions are made on an individual basis and is generally granted to students for whom English is a second language. It is always agreed that tape recordings are for personal use only, will not be distributed without prior permission from the instructor, and will be erased at the end of the course.

Students are permitted to use laptop computers during class for note-taking and course related purposes only. Students who cause a distraction to themselves, to the instructor, and/or to fellow students by abusing this privilege will be asked to withdraw from the course.

NOTE: The instructor reserves the right to revise the contents of this course syllabus as necessary.
Course Outline and Schedule

WEEK 1: Course Introduction; Protestant Orthodoxy and the ‘Counter-Renaissance’
Heppe, *Reformed Dogmatics* (selection) CAMS

WEEK 2: Descartes to Deism
Locke, *The Reasonableness of Christianity*
Rousseau, *The Creed of a Priest of Savoy* CAMS
Tindal, *Christianity as Old as the Creation* (extract) CAMS

WEEK 3: The Enlightenment and Kant
Kant, *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason*

Reaction Paper #1 Due (Locke)

WEEK 4: Idealism and Hegel
Hegel, “Without the World God Is Not God” CAMS

WEEK 5: Romanticism and Schleiermacher
Schleiermacher, *On Religion: Speeches to its Cultured Despisers*

Reaction Paper #2 Due (Kant)

WEEK 6: Moralism and Ritschl/Harnack
Harnack, *What is Christianity?*
Ritschl, *The Christian Doctrine of Justification and Reconciliation* (extract)

WEEK 7: Historicism to Troeltsch
Lessing, “On the Proof of the Spirit and of Power” CAMS
Strauss, *The Life of Jesus Critically Examined* (extract) CAMS
Schweitzer, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus* (extract), CAMS
Troeltsch, “Christianity and the History of Religion” CAMS

Reaction Paper #3 Due (Schleiermacher)

READING WEEK

WEEK 8: Critiques: Kähler and Kierkegaard; Feuerbach to Nietzsche
Kierkegaard, *Philosophical Fragments* (selection) CAMS
Feuerbach, *The Essence of Christianity* (extract) CAMS
Marx, “Thesis on Feuerbach” CAMS

Reaction Paper #4 Due (Harnack)

WEEK 9: Modern Theology and the First World War
Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans* (2nd ed., selection) CAMS
Barth, “Evangelical Theology in the 19th Century” CAMS

WEEK 10: Neo-Orthodoxy: Development and Division
Barth, *Dogmatics in Outline*
Brunner, “Nature and Grace” (selection) CAMS
Barth, “No! Answer to Emil Brunner” (selection) CAMS
Bultmann, “New Testament and Mythology” CAMS
Barth, “The Humanity of God” CAMS

Reaction Paper #5 Due (Barth)

Final Exam (OPTION #1) or Research Paper (OPTION #2), and the Completed Reading Form due December 21 by 4:00pm (December 10 for December graduates).
Selected Bibliography on Modern Theology


Reardon, Bernard M. G. Religious Thought in the Nineteenth Century: Illustrated from Writers of the Period. Cambridge University Press, 1966.


Biographical Notes


Barth, Karl (1886–1968). Swiss Reformed theologian widely regarded as the most important Protestant theologian of the twentieth century, and a key figure in the movement known as ‘neo-orthodoxy.’

Baur, Ferdinand Christian (1792–1860). German Protestant Liberal theologian, key figure in ‘the Historical Jesus Movement,’ and founder of the ‘Tübingen School.’

Bonhoeffer, Dietrich (1906–45). German theologian and pastor in the persecuted German Confessional Church, conspired against Hitler and executed by the Nazis in 1945.


Cone, James H. (1939– ). Liberation theologian and key figure in the development of the Black Liberation Theology movement in America.


Descartes, René (1596–1650). Founder of Continental rationalism and regarded as ‘the father of modern philosophy.’

Feuerbach, Ludwig (1804–72). German philosopher and critic of religion.

Foucault, Michel (1926–84). French social theorist, historian, and key figure in the development of postmodernism.


Galilei, Galileo (1564–1642). Mathematician, astronomer, and physicist who defended the theories of Copernicus and laid the foundation for the scientific revolution of the seventeenth century.

Gutiérrez, Gustavo (1928– ). Peruvian Roman Catholic priest considered to be ‘the father of liberation theology.’


Hegel, G. F. W. (1770–1831). German philosopher who sought to define and integrate the processes of nature and history, religion, politics and culture into a single vision of truth.

Henry, Carl F. H. (1913–2003). A representative theologian of the new-evangelicalism that sought to distinguish itself from fundamentalism as it rediscovered the vitality of evangelical theology.


Hume, David (1711–76). Scottish empiricist philosopher, skeptical critic of religion and rationalism.

Kähler, Martin (1835–1912). German theologian, author of a devastating critique of the ‘Historical Jesus Movement.’

Kant, Immanuel (1724–1804). Founder of the tradition of modern German philosophy, and credited with what has been referred to as a ‘Copernican revolution’ in epistemology.

Kierkegaard, Soren (1813–55). Danish philosopher, critic of Christendom, and founding figure of existentialism.

Leibniz, Gottfried Wilhelm (1646–1716). German philosopher and mathematician known especially for his ‘best of all possible worlds’ theodicy.

Lessing, Gotthold (1729–81). German Deist and literary critic who used the phrase ‘ugly, broad ditch’ in regard to the problem of historical revelation.


Luther, Martin (1483–1546). German monk, professor, and theologian commonly regarded as the leading figure of the Protestant Reformation.

Marx, Karl (1818–83). German political philosopher, economist, and critic of religion.

Moltmann, Jürgen (1926– ). German theologian who first became widely known for his ‘Theology of Hope.’


Nietzsche, Friedrich (1844–1900). German philosopher, critic of Christianity and morality, and the metaphysical tradition of philosophy stemming from Plato.

Pannenberg, Wolfhart (1928– ). German theologian who reasserted the importance of historicity in revelation of God.

Pascal, Blaise (1623–62). French mathematician and Jansenist theologian who criticized Jesuit theology from a viewpoint referred to as ‘fideism.’

Reimarus, Hermann (1694–1768). German Deist who was the first to assert a division between the Jesus of history and the Christ of faith.


Ritschl, Albrecht (1822–89). German Liberal Protestant theologian who founded the influential ‘Ritschlian school’ that stressed the ethical character of Christianity.


Rousseau, Jean-Jacques (1712–78). Deist philosopher, author, and leading figure in the movement of ‘Romanticism.’

Schleiermacher, F. D. E. (1768–1834). German theologian and founding figure of Protestant Liberal theology who sought to base religion on intuition and feeling.

Schweitzer, Albert (1875–1965). German Protestant physician and theologian who challenged the presuppositions of the ‘Historical Jesus Movement.’

Spener, Philip Jakob (1635–1705). German Lutheran theologian and founder of German Pietism.

Spinoza, Benedict de (1632–77). Dutch philosopher (of Jewish background), devised a system of metaphysical pantheism that became highly influential in the period of German philosophy after Kant.

Strauss, David Friedrich (1808–1874). German theologian associated with the Tübingen School of historical criticism who was a pioneer in the historical ‘searches’ or investigations of Jesus.

Tillich, Paul (1886–1965). German Lutheran existentialist ‘neo-orthodox’ theologian, sought to bridge the gap between Christian faith and modern culture by employing the ‘method of correlation.’

Tindal, Matthew (1655–1733). Leading English Deist who sought to develop a rational and universal Natural Religion.

Troeltsch, Ernst (1865–1923). Theologian and sociologist involved in the founding of the ‘History of Religions School.’

Turrettini, François (1623–87). Regarded as one of the most important Protestant Scholastic theologians and influential in the development of American evangelical theology, most notably through old Princeton where he was read by leaders such as Charles Hodge and B. B. Warfield.


Wesley, John (1703–91). English theologian, evangelist, pastor, and founder of Methodism.
Timeline

1517 .................... Martin Luther posts his Ninety-five Theses.
1530 .................... The Augsburg Confession is presented.
1536 .................... John Calvin publishes the first (Latin) edition of his Institutes of the Christian Religion.
1545–63 .............. The Council of Trent.
1577 .................... The Formula of Concord is published.
1611 .................... The King James Bible is completed.
1618 .................... The Thirty Years’ War begins.
1641 .................... René Descartes publishes his Meditations on First Philosophy.
1646 .................... The Westminster Confession is completed (it is approved by Parliament in June 1648).
1675 .................... Publication of Philip Jakob Spener’s Pia Desideria.
1677 .................... Baruch Spinoza’s Ethics, his most important work, is published posthumously.
1687 .................... Publication of Isaac Newton’s Principia Mathematica.
1689 .................... Publication of John Locke’s Essay Concerning Human Understanding.
1695 .................... Locke publishes The Reasonableness of Christianity as Delivered in the Scriptures.
1714 .................... Gottfried Leibniz publishes Monadology, one of his best known works.
1730 .................... Matthew Tindal publishes Christianity as old as the Creation, or the Gospel a Republication of the Religion of Nature, which became known as the ‘Bible’ of Deism.
1748 .................... Publication of David Hume’s Philosophical Essays Concerning Human Understanding, which contained his famous ‘Essay upon Miracles.’
1774–8 .............. Hermann Reimarus’ Wolfenbüttel Fragments are published in seven parts by G. E. Lessing.
1779 .................... Posthumous publication of Hume’s Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion.
1781 .................... Immanuel Kant publishes the first of his three great philosophical works, Critique of Pure Reason (Critique of Practical Reason was published in 1788, Critique of Judgment in 1790).
1789 .................... French Revolution.
1793 .................... Kant publishes Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason, his last major philosophical work.
1799 .................... F. D. E. Schleiermacher publishes his On Religion: Speeches to its Cultured Despisers.
1807 .................... Publication of Phenomenology of Mind, G. F. W. Hegel’s first great philosophical work.
1821 .................... Schleiermacher publishes his systematic theology, The Christian Faith (Glaubenslehre).
1835 .................... David Friedrich Strauss publishes The Life of Jesus Critically Examined.
1841 .................... Ludwig Feuerbach’s The Essence of Christianity is published.
1848 .................... Publication of Marx and Engels’ Communist Manifesto.
1859 ................. Darwin’s *Origin of the Species* becomes the founding document of modern evolutionary biology.

1869–70 ............. The First Vatican Council.

1887 ................. *Genealogy of Morals* is one of the last published works of Friedrich Nietzsche.

1892 ................. Martin Kähler publishes *The So-Called Historical Jesus and the Historic, Biblical Christ*.

1899 ................. Sigmund Freud publishes *The Interpretation of Dreams*, his first major work on psychoanalysis and the theory of the unconscious.

1899–1900 .......... Adolf von Harnack delivers public lectures on “The Essence of Christianity” during the winter semester at the University of Berlin (published in English in 1901 as *What is Christianity?*)

1906 ................. *The Quest of the Historical Jesus* is published by Albert Schweitzer.

1914–18 .............. World War I

1919 ................. Publication of Karl Barth’s commentary, *The Epistle to the Romans*.

1932 ................. Publication of the first-part volume of Barth’s multi-volume systematic theology, *Church Dogmatics*, which he worked on until his death in 1968.

1934 ................. Barth publishes his pamphlet, *No! Answer to Emil Brunner* in response to Brunner’s *Nature and Grace* published the same year.

1939 ................. World War II begins.


1945 ................. The Nazis execute Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

1947 ................. Carl F. H. Henry publishes *The Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism*.

1951 ................. Paul Tillich publishes the first of three volumes of his *Systematic Theology*.

1961 ................. Wolfhart Pannenberg and ‘the Pannenberg circle’ publish *Revelation as History*.


1964 ................. Jürgen Moltmann publishes his widely read *Theology of Hope*.

1966 ................. The lecture, “Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences,” is delivered by Jacques Derrida, marking the beginning of the era of poststructuralism or postmodernism in America.

1970 ................. James Cone publishes the seminal work, *A Black Theology of Liberation*.

1971 ................. *A Theology of Liberation* is published for the first time by Gustavo Gutiérrez in Lima, Peru.

1973 ................. The Center for Process Studies is founded by John Cobb and David Griffin at the School of Theology at Claremont.

1983 ................. *Sexism and God-Talk*, a pioneering work in American Christian feminist theology by Rosemary Radford Ruether is published.

1984 ................. George Lindbeck’s *The Nature of Doctrine: Religion and Theology in a Postliberal Age* is published.