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 (Dec. 18, 2012).

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 at least two hours of conversation. Each student will then write a reflection paper (min. 2500 words) which addresses the specific

1 The final version of this syllabus will be available the first day of class. All changes will concern matters of detail.
question assigned. Each paper should mention the time, date, place of the group meeting.

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%)**. The exams will be multiple choice. See note on exams below.

**Course outline**

Sept 10, 12, 2013  
**Lecture 1**  
*Creation*  
Elwell: Creation, continuous; Creation, doctrine of; Day; Dualism; Earth, Age of; Emanation; Evolution; Gap theory; Neo-platonism; Plato, Platonism; Scientific Creationism.  
Erickson, ch. 16  
Karkkainen: begin reading and finish the book by lecture 6 or 7.

Sept 17, 19  
**Lecture 2**  
*Providence, Free Will, and Evil*  
Hughes 143-200  
Elwell: Evil; Foreknowledge; Freedom, free will, and determinism; Predestination; Providence of God; Sovereignty of God.  
Erickson, ch. 17

Sept 24, 26  
**Lecture 3**  
*The Problem of Evil*  
Hughes 77-107;  
Erickson, ch. 18

Oct 1,3  
**Lecture 4**  
*Image of God*  
Hughes 1-71  
Elwell: Body, biblical view of the; Image of God; Mankind, doctrine of.  
Erickson, chs. 20-24

Oct 8, 10  

2
Lecture 5
Sin
Hughes 71-143
Kelly 344-375
Elwell: Fall of the human race; Guilt; Law, Biblical concept of; Sin;
Erickson, chs. 25-29

Reading Week (Oct 15, 17)
Group exercise: God and Evil

Oct 22, 2012
Mid-term Exam (

Oct 24, 29, 31
Lecture 6
Christology up to Nicaea
Kelly 3-29, 138-163
Hughes 237-317
Elwell: Christology; Aristotle; Stoics; Adoptionism; Antiochene Theology; Alexandrian
Theology; Apollinarianism; Gnosticism; Docetism; Monarchism.
Erickson chs. 30-32

Nov 5, 7
Lecture 7
From Nicaea to Chalcedon
Kelly 223-344
Elwell: Nestorius, Nestorianism; Chalcedon, Council of; Arianism; Substance;
Hypostasis; Hypostatic Union; Communication of Attributes; Monophysitism;
Communicatio idiomatum; Monothelitism; Mother of God.
Erickson chs. 33-34

Reading week
Group exercise: The continued significance of Chalcedonian Christology

Nov 19, 21
Lecture 8
Models of Divine Presence in Christ
Karkkainen, ch. 3, 5, 9.

Nov 26, [no class on Oct. 28: Thanksgiving Holiday]
Lecture 9
The Work of Christ: Ransom and Satisfaction
Hughes 335-355
Elwell: Propitiation; Atonement, Theories of.
Kelly 163-189
Erickson, ch. 35
Karkkainen, ch. 11.

Dec 3, 5
Lecture 10
The Work of Christ: Penal Substitution and Moral Example
Erickson, chs. 37, 38
Karkkainen, chs. 11-14.

Dec 12, 2012
Final Exam

Note on exams
- Both mid-term and final exam will consist of around 40 multiple-choice questions, with a duration of 90 minutes.
- The main texts to be studied for the exams are the entries in Elwell and the lecture notes.
- The exam questions will probe your understanding of the main concepts, of fundamental theological options, of important theological figures.
- The best preparation for these exams is careful and critical reading of the textbooks, class participation, and conversations with your peers. I will not ask questions about minutiae, or marginal information.
- Should you wish to gain more clarity on certain topics, you are welcome to sign up for office hours here: http://theologyofficehours.wordpress.com

Required reading

Books
- Veli-Matti Karkkainen, *Christ and Reconciliation* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013)

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)
• Mann, Alan, *Atonement for a Sinless Society* (Milton Keynes, Paternoster 2005)
• Finlan, Stephen, *Problems with Atonement: The Origins of, and Controversy About, the Atonement Doctrine* (Collegeville: Liturgical, 2005)