Introduction

TH 605 is a continuation of TH 504 and includes a study of the doctrines of creation, providence, man, sin, and the person and work of Christ. The purpose of the course is to explore the biblical foundations of these doctrines; to understand them in the context of their historical development; and to understand their implications for the contemporary problems of church and society. The instructor will also provide bibliographic help for further study.

Textbooks

Davis, Handbook of Basic Bible Texts

Erickson, Christian Theology, 3rd ed., chpts. 16-38

Davis, Meditation and Communion with God

Requirements

1. Regular class attendance and participation in class discussions.

2. Optional: Write a 12-15 page research paper, typed, double-spaced, on a topic germane to the course. Due date: on or before Monday, February 3rd at 4 p.m.

3. Complete a scripture meditation assignment: see p.7, syllabus; due Friday, Jan.24th.

4. Sustain a final exam: Friday, January 24th; two hours, open Bible.

Evaluation

For the final evaluation, if a research paper is written, the exam and the paper will each count one-half; otherwise, the grade for the exam will be the course grade.

Grade Scale:

A+ = 98-100; A = 93-97; A- = 90-92; B+ = 88-89; B = 83-87; B- = 80-82; C+ = 78-79; C = 73-77; C- = 70-72; D = 65-69; F = 0-64.
Course Topics and Readings:

[E=Erickson;  D=Davis, Handbook;  M = Meditation & Communion with God]

1. Introduction; the "Ontological Project" and "Evangelicalism 3.0":

2. Creation: E:16;  D: 3


4. Spirit World: E: 19;  M: 63-79

5. Providence: E: 17, 18; D:4

6. Origin of Man: E: 20,21;  D: 5


8. Original Sin: E: 25,26


10. Incarnation, Virgin Birth: E: 30, 34

11. Humanity of Christ: E:32; D: 6a

12. Deity of Christ; Union with Christ: E: 31 ; D:6b

13. Christological Creeds & Heresies: E: 33


15. Atonement: E: 37, 38


Class Meeting Dates: The class will meet Jan.6, 8, 10, , 13, 15, 17, , 21, 22, 23, 24; snow make-up date: Saturday Jan.25; [Exam: Friday, Jan.24:]
RESEARCH PAPERS

The objective of the research paper is to give the student an opportunity to explore one theological issue in some depth and to develop skills for doing theological analysis and research. The research should reflect work in significant books and theological journals.

Sample Topics

Principalities, Powers, and Spiritual Warfare
The Doctrine of Creation and Environmental Ethics
The Doctrine of Creation and Intelligent Design
The Days of Genesis One and the Age of the Earth
Divine Providence and the Problem of Evil
Miracles Today: A Healing Ministry for the Church?
The Origins of Man: Theistic Evolution?
The Image of God and Contemporary Ethical Issues
The Doctrine of Original Sin and Human Responsibility
Sin, Responsibility, and Pastoral Counseling
Psychotherapy and the Christian Doctrine of Man
A Critical Review of The Myth of God Incarnate
The Two Natures of Christ: Is it Possible to go Beyond Chalcedon?
The Temptations of Jesus
Kenotic Christologies
The Historical Jesus and Biblical Criticism
The Historical Evidence for the Resurrection of Jesus
The Biblical Doctrine of Propitiation
The New Testament Language of Atonement
The Extent of the Atonement: Universal or Particular?
A Critical Review of Gustav Aulen's Christus Victor
The Person and Work of Christ in Liberation Theologies
The Person and Work of Christ in Feminist Theologies

COLLATERAL READINGS

1. Creation and Providence

G. C. Berkouwer, The Providence of God.
J. Dillenberger, Protestant Thought and Natural Science.
L. Gilkey, Maker of Heaven and Earth.
J. W. Klotz, Genes, Genesis, and Evolution.
A. Kuyper, Lectures on Calvinism.
N. Macbeth, Darwin Retried.
A. E. Wilder Smith, Man's Origin, Man's Destiny.
2. Man

G. C. Berkouwer, Man: The Image of God.
E. Brunner, Man in Revolt.
J. Moltmann, Man: Christian Anthropology in the Conflicts of the Present.
W. Pannenberg, What Is Man?

3. Sin

G. C. Berkouwer, Sin.
J. O. Buswell, Sin and Atonement.
K. Menninger, What Ever Became of Sin?
J. Murray, The Imputation of Adam's Sin.
J. Orr, Sin as a Problem Today.
F. C. Tennant, The Sources of the Doctrine of the Fall and Original Sin
N. P. Williams, The Ideas of the Fall and Original Sin.
B. B. Warfield, Studies in Augustine and Tertullian.

4. Person of Christ

D. M. Baillie, God Was in Christ.
G. C. Berkouwer, The Person of Christ.
A. Grillmeier, Christ in Christian Tradition.
H. P. Liddon, The Divinity of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
J. G. Machen, The Virgin Birth of Christ.
W. Pannenberg, Jesus - God and Man.

5. Work of Christ

G. Aulen, Christus Victor.
E. Brunner, The Mediator.
J. Denney, The Death of Christ.
A. A. Hodge, The Atonement.

6. Systematic Theologies
K. Barth, *Church Dogmatics*.
D. Bloesch, *Essentials of Evangelical Theology*.
E. Brunner, *Dogmatics*.
C. Hodge, *Systematic Theology*.
F. Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*.
A. Thielicke, *The Evangelical Faith*.
P. Tillich, *Systematic Theology*.

**TH 605: Systematic Theology II**

**Study Questions**

1. How did the biblical doctrine of creation contribute to the rise of modern science?

2. Show how the doctrine of creation is related to other important doctrines such as man, salvation, the mission of the church, and eschatology.

3. What are the most important biblical arguments for an "old earth"? A "young earth"? How do you assess the scientific evidence?

4. Contrast a biblical understanding of *time* and *history* with nonbiblical views. What ethical consequences do such views have?

5. Comment on key ideas in Darwinian evolution. What scientific problems exist for Darwinian theory?

6. How are *demons* and *principalities* and *powers* related in the biblical world view? Where do they fit in the larger framework of Christian theology, and what significance do they have for Christian ministry today?

7. Define the term *providence* and discuss its biblical basis. How can God's providence be reconciled with massive evil and suffering in the world?

8. If God is in control of the world of nature, should we see the AIDS epidemic as a divine punishment? Why or why not?

9. Why do Christians suffer? Give six or seven possible reasons. What pastoral implications follow from this multiplicity of causes?

10. What is meant by the term "cultural mandate"? Why is the concept significant for Christian missions and for a theology for the laity?

11. What, in your view, are some important features of a biblical philosophy of education?
12. Briefly outline a biblical perspective on the role of the family in God's plan.

13. Does the Bible provide guidelines for evaluating various philosophies of government authority and power? What are these principles?

14. Do you consider theistic evolution a viable option for understanding the origins of the human race? What issues are at stake?

15. What does the Bible mean by the concept of the "image of God"? What is the ethical significance of this teaching? Is the "image" present before birth?

16. Respond to the charges that the doctrine of original sin is "unfair" and that it has questionable biblical support.

17. How would you define the essence of sin? What is the "unforgivable sin" of Mk. 3:29?

18. Explain the term "enchypostatic human nature." Why is this term significant for Christology?

19. What is the theological significance of the Virgin Birth? Does it imply a docetic Christology?

20. Do you think Jesus could have suffered from a common cold? Why or why not?

21. If Jesus is fully human, could he have yielded to temptation?

22. If Jesus was God, how could he be limited in knowledge (Mk. 13:32)?

23. In a conversation with a Jehovah's Witness, how would you show from scripture that Jesus is equal to God?

24. Explain the meaning of the "kenosis" passage in Phil. 2:5-11, and comment on its ethical significance.

25. Comment on four major "models" or explanations of the atonement in the New Testament.

26. Is the concept of a penal, substitutionary atonement supported by scripture? Why is it so unpopular in modern scholarship?

27. Assess the merits of alternative theories of the atonement such as the "moral influence," "governmental," and "Christus Victor" theories.

28. How is the resurrection of Jesus related to other aspects of New Testament teaching?

29. What is the theological significance of the Ascension? Where is the body of the Risen Christ now?

Davis:TH605syl
Scripture Meditation Assignment:

1. Text Selection:

It is suggested that you choose a text from among the following: Psalm 23; Jn.1:1-18; Jn.10:1-18 (Good Shepherd); Jn.15:1-17 (True Vine); Jn.17:20-26 (High Priestly Prayer); Matt.17:1-9 (Transfiguration; cf. 2Cor.3:17,18); Eph.1:1-23; Rom.8:1-17 (Spirit & Sonship); Matt.3:13-17 (Baptism of Jesus); Lk.15 (Prodigal Son). You may, however, choose another extended text that is meaningful to you; or, perhaps, the “Jesus Prayer” (“Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, have mercy on me, a sinner.”).

Text(s) selected: ______________________________________________

2. Text Meditation:

Your assignment is to meditate on your chosen text for at least 20 minutes a day for five days. Indicate below the month/day that you fulfilled this assignment:

Days completed: 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____

It is suggested that you follow the following classic pattern of lectio divina reading: first, place yourself in the presence of God and ask for the illumination of the Holy Spirit; second, reflect in a leisurely and contemplative way on the text for at least 30 minutes; third, thank God for any insights or “touched” received; fourth, reflect again on the text and any insights received at some later time during the day.

3. Text Reflection:

Report below on your reflections on the text and this exercise in biblical meditation. What new insights, if any, did you receive? Did you have any trouble concentrating? How was this different from your previous patterns of scripture study and devotion?

Name: ____________________________________________