TH607 Systematic Theology III
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Syllabus
Summer 2016

Course description

TH607 is the capstone of the systematic theology classes at Gordon-Conwell. As a result, I am very intentional about making it an integrative experience. The following doctrines are explicitly covered: Holy Spirit and spiritual gifts, salvation, church and sacraments, eschatology and final states. A very important objective of this class is to find the coherence between these doctrines and the rest of systematic theology, but also their significance for Christian life.

The doctrine of the person and work of the Holy Spirit grounds the rest of the discussion of soteriology, ecclesiology, and eschatology. A specifically Trinitarian Pneumatology is determinative for one’s understanding of the work of the Holy Spirit. On the other hand, a Trinitarian Christology leads to overcoming some of the oppositions between ‘merely’ forensic and participationist understandings of salvation (justification and sanctification). Moving into the doctrine of the church, a robustly Trinitarian theology will be shown to mediate between highly individualistic and highly institutionalized ecclesiologies.

* [Summer 2016 specific:] The class meets for lectures between May 31st and June 4th, from 9:00AM-12:00PM and 1:00PM to 2:00 PM. However, the student will be required to
  (a) Watch certain video lectures before May 31st
  (b) Read Volf and Torrance before May 31st
  (c) Write a paper on the doctrine of the church (see below)
  (d) Write a final doctrinal statement until August 15th (see below).

Comment on the structure of the teaching week (May 31-June 4)
- I will employ a variety of teaching techniques in order to make the best use of this intensive learning experience. Since I will not be able to cover all TH607 material in class, you will be expected to complete watching some of the lectures online through Sakai.
- An outline of the teaching week schedule will be provided in class on May 31st.
Learning outcomes

• To understand the systematic coherence of pneumatology, soteriology, ecclesiology, and eschatology.
• To understand the differences between major Christian confessions on the respective topics.
• To understand what is at stake in various soteriologies, including their practical implications for the life of the church.
• To gain a better understanding of the distinctive role played by the Holy Spirit in salvation and the life of the church.
• To gain a sense for the importance and reality of the church and its implications for the life of the congregation.
• To understand various ecclesiological assumptions made by the variety of worship styles and liturgical traditions.
• To gain an appreciation for the importance of catechetical formation for the life of the church.
• To understand the implications of each of these topics for the following areas: evangelism, worship, missions, discipleship etc.

Course outline
- To be provided on the first day of class.

Evaluation and Course Requirements

(1) Required reading (see required texts)
   a. Reading report: (10%) A report of the percentage of completed reading must be presented together with all other materials due on Aug 12.

(2) Residency activities
   a. Class participation: your participation in class discussion and activities will be graded (10%). It is highly desirable that you purchase and read at least read Volf and Torrance until May 31st. You will be asked to draw upon your reading of these two books in class discussion.

(3) Pre and Post-residency activities.
   a. Video Lectures: You are required to watch several video presentations (uploaded on Sakai), which cover topics that were skipped over in class. You should complete watching these lectures by May 31st. Our in-class discussions will draw on these lectures.
   b. Final research paper. (40%). You are to write a 5-6 pages paper on the issue of the church’s mission in a post-Christendom society. Address the question: “What must the church change and what must it keep as it engages in mission in the current context?” Special attention
must be paid to the following societal conditions: (a) the rise of the “nones;” (b) changes in the modes of believing (refer to the work of Charles Taylor and James K. A. Smith for the second condition). You must base your conclusions on a study of social trends and on a theological understanding of the church’s nature and mission. You will then post your document in a forum on Sakai by July 25th and then write one two page critique of another student’s paper by August 12.

c. **Final statement of faith (40%).** You are to write a 8-10 page paper, 1.5 spaced, presenting your theological position. This paper does not require research. Instead it is meant as an opportunity for the student to reflect on the coherence of her theological position as a whole. The following topics must be addressed (underlined topics should receive special attention): Doctrine of Scripture, divine attributes, doctrine of the Trinity, the works of the Trinity, creation, providence, anthropology, doctrine of original sin, Christology, atonement, person and work of the Holy Spirit, the relationship between the Spirit and Christ, justification, regeneration, predestination, sanctification, the nature and marks of the church, church governance, sacramentology, eschatology. The paper must intentionally explore the logical links between your take on various theological loci. More explanation of expectations and other instructions to be provided in class.

   i. Due August 12

**Required Reading**

**Books**


**Additional bibliography**


