

Northern Seminary
TH 301-1 Christian Theology I
Fall 2014
Tuesdays, 4:00-6:40 pm
Dr. Cherith Fee Nordling
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Office Hours: (by appointment)

“one cannot speak of God simply by speaking of [humanity] in a loud voice.”

Karl Barth

Course Description

This course is the first in a two-course sequence in basic Christian theology, which includes an introduction to the major categories (loci) in theological construction. The historical and traditional engagements with theological issues will be correlated with the student’s confession of faith and the biblical foundations of theology, the socio-cultural contexts of faith and practice, and the life and mission of the Christian community.

Mission Statement Alignment

This is a required core class in the Northern Seminary curriculum. Its purpose is to survey the scope of Christian theology and its Biblical foundations. This class will put together a way of articulating the Christian faith that is consistent with Scripture, conversant with history and tradition (with attention paid to diverse intercultural and multiracial voices), connected to the student’s life in the Spirit to grow in wholeness and maturity, to bear witness to Jesus Christ and the Triune God (confession and praxis), and engaging particular socio-cultural contexts of the Christian community’s life and mission in ways that are pastoral, evangelistic and prophetic.

Learning Outcomes

As we trace and affirm anew the central doctrinal vision of the Christian faith, we do not construct theology on our own terms. Rather, we enter a long, enduring, and meaning-filled dialogue emerging from the Triune relationship of God and his people into which we have been invited. Only here can we know God, ourselves, and the eternal story of our life with God. Our engagement with and appropriation of some of the great historical traditions of the Church will enable you to articulate a Christian witness that is equally meaningful and resourceful to vocation, ministry, and discipleship within your contemporary global contexts.

To that end, in this course you will:

- 1) *develop* an awareness of the breadth and depth and continuing significance of Christian theology as it has historically developed (primarily along the Western trajectory), through readings, lectures and class discussion.
- 2) *articulate* your understanding of the nature of theology, its methods, its resources, and criteria through class discussion.
- 3) *explicate* the Christian understanding of the Triune God, the *imago dei*, humanity, and the significance of the person of Christ in papers, non-prose work and class discussion.
- 4) *identify* and *communicate* the contextual nature of all theology including the limitations of your own context and enter into an ongoing dialogue with the Judeo-Christian community (past and the present) through written work and non-prose work.

Course Requirements & Evaluation

Percentage of Grade by Assignment (See Grading Policy):

Vocabulary Quiz	10%
God/Body Maps	15%
Papers	<u>75%</u>
	100%

Assignments

1) Weekly Reading:

Each student will be expected to read and engage in class with the weekly readings (Weekly lecture notes will also be posted on Moodle for your reference.)

2) Vocabulary Quiz: Due 9/30 (10 pts)

Immanent Trinity	Gnosticism
Eschatology	Christology
Ecclesiology	Economic Trinity
<i>Imago Dei</i>	Hypostasis
Modalism	Salvation
Apollonarianism	Epistemology
Soteriology	Homoousion
Binitarianism	Theological Anthropology
Nestorianism	Docetism
Creation <i>ex nihilo</i>	Hypostatic Union
Incarnation	Pneumatology
Pre-millennialism	Post-millennialism
Chalcedonian Statement on Christ	Nicene Creed
Perichoresis	Eucharist

Goal: You will become familiar with some of the basic terminology and concepts of Christian doctrine that will be used in class (welcome to your new ‘short-hand’ language!)

3) God Map/Body Map: Due - 10/7 (15 pts)

Description: This **two-part**, non-prose project allows you to create two objects; **i)** one that helps you to show your view of **God** (or a particular attribute of God), and **ii)** one that helps you to show describe **your (dis)embodied self**. As you “map out” your view of God and yourself, use *your right brain imagination, be brave, and tell the truth*.

Mediums may vary. (You can paint, make a collage, write a poem or a short story, compose a piece of music, draw flow charts, etc.)

You may submit a one-paragraph explanation along with each piece.

4) Papers #1-3: Due - 10/21, 11/11, 12/2 (25 pts each, 75 pts total)

Length: 5 pages each

Description: These papers give you the opportunity to interact with the weekly readings both in review and reflection, AND to engage with their theological perspectives. Each paper should include properly cited ideas and direct quotes from the assigned readings as well as the specific additional sources listed under each paper below (full bibliography under course schedule).

Paper #1: Creation-Resurrection-New Creation

Additional sources:

Gunton, *Christ and Creation*

Nordling, “Resurrection”

In this paper you are to engage with the readings and lectures to explore what things you are learning that have expanded your understanding of what God has always been doing in the world to bring it to its completion. You may want to use the questions at the end of the Pahl chapters or in Wright to help jumpstart your thinking.

Paper #2: Jesus & the Spirit—Jesus the Lord

Additional source:

Irenaeus, and Balthasar, Hans Urs Von (ed). *The Scandal of the Incarnation*

In this paper you are to engage the theological ideas on the humanity and divinity of Christ as it unfolds in the New Testament. This takes account of Jesus’ authentic humanity lived by the Spirit and the high Christology and worship given to him by the early church. Engage with the idea of the importance for the church to hold together both the person AND the work of Jesus Christ and not divide them as happens in some theologies.

Paper #3: Participation in the Triune Life of God

Additional sources:

O’Collins, Gerald. “The History of Jesus and Its Trinitarian Face”

Torrance, T.F. “The Christian Apprehension of God the Father”

In this paper you are to engage the development of early Trinitarian theology based on Jesus as the Self-revelation of God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. You will account for how Jesus becomes the center of and entry point for our understanding of and participation in the life of the triune God. That is, how does an orthodox understanding of Jesus as both fully human and fully divine (against the early church heresies) allow us access into the relational life and mission of God?

Grading Rubric for Papers: graded on a scale of 1 (low) to 5 (high)

- _____ Clear Expression of Authors’ Main Theses/Ideas (20% of total grade)
 - _____ Well-organized, with supporting examples (35% of total grade)
 - _____ Complete, clear, interesting engagement with authors’ ideas (35% of total grade)
 - _____ Error-free grammar and spelling (10% of total grade)
- (≥3 corrections on a page = 1 pt off for that page.)

Course Schedule & Assignments

DATE:	TOPICS:	READINGS/ASSIGNMENTS:
Wk 1: 9/23	Theological Narratives	
Wk 2: 9/30	‘Knowing’ the Christian Story: Embodied Participation in the	📖 Due: Vocabulary Quiz 📖 Reading Due:

	Triune Life of God or Modernist Propositions?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fee/Stuart, “Need to Interpret,” 13-27 • Jones, <i>Practicing Doctrine</i>, 11-53
Wk 3: 10/7	Resurrection, Creation & the Triune Self-Revelation of God	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✂ Due: <u>God Map/Body Map</u> 📖 Reading Due: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pahl, <i>From Resurrection to New Creation</i>
Wk 4: 10/14	Image-Bearing and the Triune Self-Revelation of God	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 📖 Reading Due: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wright, <i>Surprised by Hope</i>, 93-188
Wk 5: 10/21	Image-Bearing and the Triune Self-Revelation of God	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✂ Due: <u>Paper #1: Creation-Resurrection-New Creation</u> 📖 Reading Due: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watts, “The New Exodus,” 15-41 • Jones, <i>Practicing Doctrine</i>, 97-116
Wk 6: 10/28	Jesus, Image-Bearing and the Triune Self-Revelation of God	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 📖 Reading Due: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hawthorne, Ch 1, 2, 4 (86pp) • Fee, <i>Pauline Christology</i> (30 pp)
Wk 7: 11/4	Christology & Soteriology: The Person and Work of Christ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 📖 Reading Due: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hawthorne, Ch 5-7 (113 pp)
Wk 8: 11/11	Christology & Soteriology: The Person and Work of Christ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✂ Due: <u>Paper #2: Jesus & the Spirit—Jesus the Lord</u> 📖 Reading Due: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Athanasius, <i>On the Incarnation</i>, Introduction, 17-24; §§4, 6-32 • Torrance, <i>Incarnation</i>, 94 pp
Wk 9: 11/18	Christology, Mediation & Reconciliation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 📖 Reading Due: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bauckham, “God Crucified” (89pp) • Gunton, “One Mediator... The Man Jesus Christ,” 146-158
Wk 10: 12/2	Christology & the Trinity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✂ Due: <u>Paper #3: Our Participation in the Triune Life of God</u> 📖 Reading Due: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jones, <i>Practicing Doctrine</i>, 117-39, 55-76 • Gonzalez, <i>Mañana</i>, pp 89-115

Required Books:

Bauckham, Richard. *God Crucified: Monotheism and Christology in the New Testament*.

Eerdmans, 1998. ISBN: 0802846424; \$9.99 (Kindle version or **on Reserve**).

Grenz, Stan, David Guretzki and Cherith Fee Nordling. *Pocket Dictionary of Theological Terms*.

Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1999. ISBN: 0830814493; \$8.00; 122 pp.

- Hawthorne, Gerald H. *The Presence and the Power: The Significance of the Holy Spirit in the Life and Ministry of Jesus*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock (Reprint edition) 2003. ISBN: 1592441602 \$25.20; 276 pp.
- Jones, Beth Felker. *Practicing Christian Doctrine: An Introduction to Thinking and Living Theologically*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2014. ISBN: 9780801049330 \$22.99; 256 pp.
- Pahl, Michael W. *From Resurrection to New Creation: A First Journey in Christian Theology*. Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2010. ISBN: 9781608992591; \$18.00; 118 pp.
- Torrance, Thomas F. *Incarnation: The Person and Life of Christ*. Edited by Robert Walker. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2009. ISBN: 9780830828913 \$26.80; 371pp. **(67-160 only)**
- Wright, N. T. *Surprised by Hope: Rethinking Heaven, the Resurrection, and the Mission of the Church*. San Francisco, CA: HarperOne, 2008. ISBN: 0061551821; \$24.00; 352 pp. **(Ch 6-11 only)**

Required Articles/Book Chapters (available on Moodle, library reserve or CCEL-online)

- Athanasius, *On the Incarnation*. (see CCEL online)
- Fee, Gordon and Douglas Stuart. "The Need to Interpret." In *How to Read the Bible for All its Worth*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003, pp 13-27.
- Fee, Gordon and Nordling, Cherith Fee. *Pauline Christology* (draft redux version)
- Gonzalez, Justo L. *Mañana: Theology from a Hispanic Perspective*. Abingdon Press, 1990. ISBN: 0687230675; \$20.00, ch 6 & 7 (27 pp).
- Gunton, Colin. "One Mediator... The Man Jesus Christ." *Pro Ecclesia* XI/2 (2002): 146-158.
- Watts, Rikk. "The New Exodus/New Creational Restoration of the Image of God." In *What Does it Mean to be Saved?* Edited by John Stackhouse. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2002, 15-41.

Additional Bibliography for Papers:

- Gunton, Colin E. *Christ and Creation: The Didsbury Lectures 1990*. Reprint edition. Wipf & Stock, 1992.
- Irenaeus and Balthasar, Hans Urs Von. *The Scandal of the Incarnation: Irenaeus Against the Heresies*. Trans. John Saward. San Francisco; Ignatius Press, 1990.
- Nordling, Cherith Fee. "Resurrection." Pages 178-190. In *Prophetic Evangelicals: Envisioning a Just and Peaceable Kingdom*. Edited by B. E. Benson, M. E. Berry, P. G. Heltzel. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012.
- O'Collins, Gerald. "The History of Jesus and Its Trinitarian Face." In *The Tri-Personal God: Understanding and Interpreting the Trinity*. 35-49. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1999.
- Torrance, T.F. "The Christian Apprehension of God the Father," in *Speaking the Christian God: The Holy Trinity and the Challenge of Feminism*, edited by Alvin Kimel, 120-143. Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1992.

Course Policies

1. Grading Scale

The following grade standards are not "relative" to other Northern students, but are as "absolute" or "objective" as possible regarding standards of graduate-level work generally.

- **"A" for "distinctive" work** means that all the work submitted is of superior and some even of distinctive quality, demonstrating clear and deep understanding as well as interaction with

class concepts, originality, and nuanced, mature judgment. Assignments reflect a great deal of effort and reflection, with clear and creative thinking throughout – outstanding in all respects, including written presentation.

- “**B**” for “**superior**” work means that the majority of the work demonstrates good comprehension of class concepts, and there is a fair amount of deep and creative thinking, reflecting personal (intellectual and spiritual) growth. Most assignments demonstrate considerable effort, and there is consistency to their level of achievement.
- “**C**” for “**acceptable**” work means that the student demonstrates adequate comprehension of class concepts and some deeper thinking on certain relevant issues. Quality is uneven, some work being average while other work demonstrates more minimal effort. Overall, the work is undistinguished but adequate to the basic achievement of course goals. Essays whose grade falls within the ‘C’ range lack essential material and show insufficient reading and effort to be acceptable, perhaps, even to the point of showing obvious misunderstanding.
- “**D**” for “**unsatisfactory**” means that the student demonstrates minimal effort and poor understanding. The majority of the work is apparently rushed, of substandard quality, and does not indicate basic achievement of course objectives.

2. The Grading Scale is as follows:

A	= 100 – 95	Distinctive
A-	= 94 - 90	
B+	= 89 - 87	
B	= 86 – 83	Superior
B-	= 82 - 80	
C+	= 79 - 77	
C	= 76 – 73	Acceptable
C-	= 72 - 70	
D+	= 69 - 67	
D	= 66 – 63	Unsatisfactory
D-	= 62 - 60	
F	= 59 and below	

This grading scale is based on *content and form*. **Writing errors** will lower your grade accordingly. It is expected that written products will be legible, professional in appearance and **ERROR FREE** in regard to spelling, punctuation and grammar.

3. Requests for extensions must be submitted in writing to the professor and will be granted without penalty only under extenuating circumstances (such as a grave illness or family death – not having time, work crises, computer glitches, etc. don’t cut it). Other extensions granted will be assessed a penalty for late submission at the discretion of the instructor.

POLICIES FOR ALL MASTERS CLASSES

NOTE: All communications from the seminary will go to your seminary email account. Contact ithelpdesk@seminary.edu if you need help forwarding your seminary email address to your personal email address.

As a seminary community we hold integrity/hospitality as core values. Individuals are able to do their best work and thinking when their peers are fully present and engaged. We expect each person to both participate in class and carefully listen to others with the belief that everyone's contribution is equally important. Therefore, the following policies have been established in order to provide clarity in regard to attendance expectations and relationships in the classroom.

Class Attendance Policy

It is expected that students will attend and participate in all class sessions. Failure to attend at least 80% of class sessions is grounds for automatic failure. A professor may set other attendance expectations. Students are always expected to communicate with a professor **in advance** if they will be absent. Attendance expectations are higher for online and intensive courses (see syllabus for specific requirements).

Class Tardiness Policy

The third time a student is late to the start of class, it will be counted as a class absence. It is also expected that students will return from a break by the time specified by the professor.

Late Work Policy

If a student cannot complete the work for a course by the due date listed on the syllabus, they must submit a "Request for a Grade of Incomplete" form to the Registrar by 4:30 of the last day of the term. The form must be signed by the instructor and Dean of Students. The professor may set stipulations and grade reductions. In the absence of a formal request form, the student will receive a grade based upon work completed by the last day of the term.

Turabian Format

All papers, including footnotes and bibliography, must be submitted in the correct format according to Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 7th ed., 2007.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the act of passing off as one's own the words or ideas of someone else without providing proper acknowledgement or documentation. See the "Academic Honesty Policy" in the Seminary Catalog for more information on plagiarism and how to avoid it. All papers will be submitted electronically through TURNITIN, the plagiarism assessment tool. You may submit drafts of papers ahead of time and get a TURNITIN assessment to help you make necessary corrections prior to submitting the final draft.

Electronic Format - TURNITIN

Unless otherwise specified by the professor, all written (prose) work must be submitted electronically in a Word document format (.doc, .docx) through TURNITIN.

Technology Use in the Classroom

Unless directly tied to note-taking, students will refrain from using electronic devices in class.

Course Evaluation in Moodle

Students must complete an online course evaluation using the seminary Moodle system at <http://moodle.seminary.edu> in order to receive a final grade for the course. The evaluation will be open for one week starting the last day of the term. If you need assistance connecting to Moodle or accessing the evaluation, please send an email to ithelpdesk@seminary.edu.