

COURSE OF STUDY SCHOOL
Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary
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YEAR TWO

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Course 222 – Theological Heritage II: Early Church

In this course, we will explore the history of the early Christian Church through the development of its doctrine and ecclesiology. Our journey begins in the First Century and ends in the early Middle Ages, with attention given to the first five centuries, because it is during this period that the story of Christianity unfolds and the Church's struggle to define itself and its beliefs are formed. The history of Christianity is the story of the Church's struggle to interpret the sacred writings and the building of traditions and doctrines of the faith, in response to the diverse sects that emerge from that struggle.

Course Objectives

Knowing:

- To gain a deeper understanding of the development of Christian theology and ecclesiology in the early Church.
- To understand the influence the Roman empire had on the development of Christianity.
- To study how alternative expressions (heterodoxy) of the faith forced orthodoxy to define itself as the Church grew and expanded geographically.

Doing:

- To be able to synthesize and articulate an understanding of the development and evolution of doctrine and church traditions through course assignments.
- To be able to identify and discuss both orthodoxy and heterodoxy in today's contemporary context, in which popular theology often incorporates elements that the early Church called "heresy."
- To apply the principles learned from history to relevant contemporary situations.

Being:

- To be a pastor or church leader who is informed about the development of doctrine and the theological alternatives that existed during the time that the Church was evolving.
- To be a pastor whose faith is grounded on a foundation of Scripture and tradition that is informed and interpreted by those faithful who came before us and passed the faith on to us.
- To be a pastor that can explain to a lay audience the implications that tradition offers for confronting today's issues and for contemporary theology.
- To be a pastor that values and can identify ancient spiritual practices and be able to incorporate some of their elements into the spiritual practices of their congregations.

Required Texts

Theological Turning Points, by Donald K. McKim (Westminster – John Knox Press, ISBN 978-0804207027)

The Story of Christianity: The Early Church to the Dawn of the Reformation, Vol. 1, by Justo L. Gonzalez (Harper One, ISBN 978-0061855887)

To Love as God Loves: Conversation with the Early Church, by Roberta C. Bondi (Fortress Press, ISBN 978-0800620417)

Documents of the Christian Church, Fourth Edition, by Henry Bettenson & Chris Maunder, Ed. (Oxford University Press, ISBN 978-0199568987)

Strongly suggested:

Trinity 101: Father, Son, Holy Spirit, by James L. Papandrea, (Liguori Press, ISBN-10: 0764820826). Available for Kindle.

Course Requirements

Read Bondi text in its entirety and the rest as assigned.

Class Handouts on COS hub:

Patristic Exegesis - PDF

The Eastern Schism – PDF

The Great Schism: The Estrangement of Eastern and Western Christendom – PDF

Arius' Creed – PDF

Creed Comparison Table - PDF

Christological/Theological Concepts & Doctrine – PDF

Read the following Primary documents on line as assigned:

[Perpetua's Passion](#)

[Tertullian, Against Praxeas](#)

[Augustine of Hippo, Confessions Book 2.4-10](#)

[Augustine of Hippo, Confessions Book 8.11-12](#)

Pre-class Coursework Assignments (Due June 15, 2018)

Any pre-class assignment not receiving 7.5/10 points will need to be re-written until passing.

Reach Chapters 1-13 in Gonzalez to get an overview.

Watch the relevant video lectures by G-ETS professor Dr. Jim Papandrea and read the corresponding assigned reading before writing your answers to the questions below. To obtain a passing grade, you will need to cite all assigned sources. Use only assigned sources to answer the questions.

To view the videos, click on the video on the Moodle page.

Write 2-3 pages (double spaced) on each of the following questions. **Frame your answers by keeping in mind these three questions:**

- 1. What is going on that the Church must address this issue?**
- 2. Who are the players? Include names and dates so you can develop a timeline of thought.**
- 3. What outcome or decision resulted and why?**

Do not give me a summary of the lecture or your readings but write a persuasive answer to each question. You will need to engage both the online lecture and assigned texts to answer each question properly. As you progress through the questions, look for some common themes and threads to emerge. Again, don't forget to cite your sources.

VIDEO: [The Sub-Apostolic Age \(Week 1\)](#)

Assigned reading: Bettenson, p. 74-81.

- 1) What is "orthodoxy," and how was it determined in the early Church? In other words, how did the early Church determine what teachings were correct or incorrect, and why was this important?

VIDEO: [The Apologists \(Week 2\)](#)

Assigned reading: McKim, p. 9-10

[Perpetua's Passion](#)

- 2) Who were the Apologists, and how were they different from the theologians? How does Perpetua's Passion help you understand the work of the Apologists?

VIDEO: [The New Testament Canon and Patristic Exegesis \(Week 3\)](#)

Assigned reading: Bettenson, p. 29-32

McKim p. 96-101

Handout: Patristic Exegesis

- 3) How did the apostolic documents become the New Testament? What are the tenants of Patristic exegesis?

VIDEO: [The First Theologians: Irenaeus and Tertullian \(Week 3\)](#)

Assigned reading: [Against Praxeas](#)

McKim, p. 10-14

Bettensen, p. 32-34

- 4) Keeping in mind Tertullian's historical context, what does he find problematic in Praxeas' theology regarding God?

VIDEO: [The Episcopacy and Montanism \(Week 5\)](#)

Assigned readings: McKim p. 44-49, 96-103

Bettenson, p. 68-81, 84-85

- 5) Explain the development of authority and hierarchy in the early Church. Include engagement with the assigned primary sources above.

VIDEO: [Persecution and the Controversies Over the Lapsed and Baptism \(Week 5\)](#)

Assigned readings: McKim, p. 50-54

- 6) What were the implications of the persecutions for the Church in the Third Century? What problem did the Church wrestle with and resolve?

VIDEO: [The Office of the Papacy \(Week 12\)](#)

Assigned readings: McKim, 102-108, 111-113
Bettenson, p. 86-90

- 7) No written work is due for these assigned readings.

VIDEO: [The Division of East and West \(Week 12\)](#)

Assigned readings: Catholic perspective, *The Eastern Schism* - PDF
Orthodox perspective, *The Great Schism: The Estrangement of Eastern and Western Christendom* – PDF
Bettenson, p. 97-126

- 8) According to the two perspectives above, why did the Eastern (Orthodox) and Western (Catholic) halves of the Church split in the Eleventh Century? Where do they agree and how do their perspectives differ?

REFLECTION:

- 9) Write a 2-3-page reflection on how Roberta Bondi's book, *To Love as God Loves* may help you in your ministry.

Final Assignment:

During the residential portion of the course, students will write a sermon for Trinity Sunday, which will explain the Trinity without the use of analogies, but in language that a congregation would understand that also incorporates the theology learned in the lectures. This may include creating a PowerPoint with script.

Instructions for writing your paper:

- 1) After reading the texts and watching the video lectures, answer the questions in your own words and cite your sources. The point of the exercise is to demonstrate that you have read and understood the material, can articulate the importance of issues the early Church confronted, and identify common threads.
- 2) Each paper is to be completed in 12-point font, preferably Times New Roman. Save your paper as a Word file (.doc or .docx) or in Rich Text Format (.rtf) if Word is not an option. **Do not send .pdf files.**
- 3) Make sure your **name and class information are on each page in the header** and include page numbers in the footer. Create a title page that includes your name, the name of the course, the instructor's name and the begin date of our class meeting.
- 4) Begin each new question as a new page, with the question as the title.
- 5) Save your file with the following file name: **Lastname#S2018.docx** (example for assignment one: Korak1S2019.docx) #=assignment number, S=Summer, 2019=year)
- 6) Avoid long quotations. If you do quote from one of the assigned reading sources, or even refer to another person's idea, you must include a footnote with the citation. All quotations must be enclosed in quotation marks. Use the Chicago Manual of Style or Turabian footnote format as outlined on the style sheet. See plagiarism note below.
- 7) Do not write out biblical quotations. If you want to refer to a Bible passage, you do not need to indicate which version of the Bible you are using.
- 8) Please edit for grammar and spelling before submitting your work.

- 9) Submit your work on Moodle using **Turn-it-In** by the due date as listed in your [COS Student Manual](#), **along with a copy to the instructor.**

PLAGARISM NOTE: The uncited use of someone else's work is plagiarism and will not be tolerated. Direct quotations that are not placed within quotation marks will be considered improperly cited as well. Please write your papers from the assigned course materials only. Do not use Internet sources. Professors are obligated to report all instances of plagiarism to the Director of the Course of Study. Upon suspicion of plagiarism, the Director will arrange for a meeting with the professor and the student, and the student will be given the opportunity to explain the situation. The Director, in consultation with the professor, will decide about whether work was plagiarized. Confirmed plagiarism will result in failure of the course, with notification to be sent to the Conference Course of Study Registrar and the Division of Ordained Ministry. If you are unsure as to what constitutes plagiarism, please do the following tutorial exercise: <https://www.indiana.edu/~istd/>

Pre-Residential Engagement:

Recorded Lecture link will be emailed and made available on Moodle the week of May 20th. Watch the lecture and participate in the online forum between June 15th and July 1st.

Topic: Origins of Christian Baptism

Corresponding Reading: McKim, chapter 7, pp. 115-129

Pre-residential Lecture

Recorded introductory lecture link will be emailed and made available on Moodle the weekend before class begins.

Topic: The Apostolic Age

Corresponding Reading: McKim, 1-8, 22-25, 44-47

Residential Session

Before the residential session begins, read Gonzalez chapters 16, 17, 19, 20, 24, and 28.

Course Lecture Schedule:

Day 1 Topics:

Understanding the Trinity. Groups will be formed for Thursday's in-class exercise.

Orthodoxy and Heresy in the Second Century

Orthodoxy and Heresy in the Third Century

Corresponding reading: McKim p. 8-14, 22-29, 74-83, 139-147

Bettenson, p. 34-35, 38-42

Papandrea, Trinity 101 (if you have it review it).

[Tertullian, Against Praxeas](#)

Day 2 Topics:

Hippolytus and Novatian on the Trinity

The Arian Controversy

Corresponding reading: McKim p. 14-19, 83-85

Bettenson, p. 36-37

Day 3 Topics:

The Cappadocians and the Divinity of the Holy Spirit
The Councils of Nicaea and Constantinople, and the Doctrine of the Trinity
Corresponding reading: McKim, p. 18-19, 32-33, 101-103
Bettenson, p. 47-54

After today's lectures, you have everything you need to write your final paper.

Day 4 Topics:

Christology and the Councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon
Forming your own doctrine of God – in class exercise.
Corresponding Reading: McKim, p. 33-43, 125-129
Bettenson, 47-68

Day 5 Topics:

Augustine of Hippo
The Pelagian Controversy
Corresponding Reading: McKim p. 56-59, 60-73, 85-95
Bettenson, p. 85-86.
[Augustine of Hippo, Confessions Book 2.4-10](#)
[Augustine of Hippo, Confessions Book 8.11-12](#)

Suggested Resources for Further Study

Gavrilyk, Paul L., *The Suffering of the Impassible God* (Oxford University Press, 2004)

The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Studies, Ed. Susan Harvey & David Hunter (Oxford University Press, 2010)

Heine, Ronald E., *Classical Christian Doctrine: Introducing the Essentials of the Ancient Faith* (Baker Academic, 2013)

McGuckin, John Anthony, *The Westminster Handbook to Patristic Theology* (Westminster John Knox Press, 2004)

Norris, Richard A., *The Christological Controversy* (Fortress Press, 1980)

Papandrea, James L., *Reading the Early Church Fathers: From the Didache to Nicaea* (Paulist Press, 2012)

_____, *Trinity 101: Father, Son, Holy Spirit* (Liguori Press, 2012)

Rusch, William G., *The Trinitarian Controversy* (Fortress Press, 1980)