



TYNDALE

• SEMINARY •

Course Syllabus

**SPRING/SUMMER 2019
THEOLOGY OF THE HUMAN PERSON
THEO 0646**

**MAY 13 – 17
MONDAY to FRIDAY, 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM**

INSTRUCTOR: THE REVEREND DR. V. SHEPHERD
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Office Hours: As posted

Access course material at <http://classes.tyndale.ca/>
Course emails will be sent to your @MyTyndale.ca e-mail account only.
[Learn how to access and forward emails to your personal account.](#)

The mission of Tyndale Seminary is to provide Christ-centred graduate theological education for leaders in the church and society whose lives are marked by intellectual maturity, spiritual vigour and moral integrity, and whose witness will faithfully engage culture with the Gospel.

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Acquaints students with the theology of the human person. It focuses on biblical and doctrinal issues that bear upon such questions as “What does it mean to be a human being?”, “What is meant by the ‘image of God’?” and “How is the Person of God related to the personhood of human beings?”

Prerequisites: THEO 0531 Systematic Theology I

II. LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. articulate how a proper understanding of God entails a proper understanding of humankind; i.e., that since theology discusses all of life under God, “theology” necessarily includes “theological anthropology”;
2. probe the relation of Christology to anthropology;
3. discern the manner in which the non-objectifiable “Thou” of God and the “thou” of the neighbour are determinants of the human;
4. recognize non-theological anthropologies that students may have absorbed implicitly or that different philosophies, psychologies and psychotherapies endorse explicitly;
5. identify areas of convergence and divergence concerning social, scientific and theological perspectives on the human person;
6. investigate how gender specificity and gender complementarity are related to humanness;
7. examine frequently misunderstood Christian notions (e.g., sin, evil, grace, providence, love, forgiveness) that pertain immediately to our understanding of the human and our attempts at relieving human distress.

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. REQUIRED READING:

To be purchased:

Ray S. Anderson, *On Being Human: Essays in Theological Anthropology*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Pub, 2010. ISBN-10: 1608999742, ISBN-13: 978-1608999743

B. SUPPLEMENTARY / RECOMMENDED READING AND TOOLS

Tyndale recommends www.stepbible.org – a free and reputable online resource developed by Tyndale House (Cambridge, England) – for word searches of original-language texts, as well as for topical searches, interlinear texts, dictionaries, etc. Refer to the library for other [online resources for Biblical Studies](#).

C. ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Note: All written material may be submitted in French.

1. a written comment on a novel, short story, poem or movie, the comment to reflect the student’s **theological** assessment of the implicit anthropology in the item under discussion (700 words). See “Comment Topics” below; 20% of final grade.
Due: Postmarked May 29. [Note: The grade on late papers will be reduced by 5% per day.]
2. a major essay (2500-3000 words). See “Essay Topics” below. 40% of final grade.

Due: Postmarked July 13. [Note: The grade on late papers and the examination will be reduced by 5% per day.]

3. a final, 'take-home' examination; 40% of final grade. Examination and major essay are to be submitted together. **Due: Postmarked July 13.** [Note: the grade on late exams will be reduced 5% per day.]

Exam Question: ***Integrating your reading of the textbook for the course, as well as lectures, handouts, classroom discussions and your general theological knowledge, articulate a theological anthropology.***

Your answer should reflect your apprehension of the major topics of the course.

All assignments must be printed; electronic submissions will not be accepted.

The assignment is deemed 'submitted' when a printed copy has been deposited with the instructor.

Assignments are to be mailed to

**Dr Victor Shepherd
91 Swanhurst Blvd.
Mississauga, ON
L5N 1B8**

D. EQUITY OF ACCESS

Students with permanent or temporary disabilities who need academic accommodations must [contact](#) the [Accessibility Services](#) at the [Centre for Academic Excellence](#) to [register](#) and discuss their specific needs. *New students* must self-identify and register with the Accessibility Office at the beginning of the semester or as early as possible to access appropriate services. *Current students* must renew their plans as early as possible to have active accommodations in place.

E. SUMMARY OF ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Evaluation is based upon the completion of the following assignments:

Comment	20 %
Essay	40 %
Examination	40 %
Total Grade	100 %

F. GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR THE SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN WORK

Academic Integrity

For proper citation style, consult the [Chicago-Style Quick Guide](#) (Tyndale e-resource) or the full edition of the [Chicago Manual of Style Online](#), especially [ch. 14](#). For citing scripture texts, refer to sections [10.44 to 10.48](#) and [14.238 to 14.241](#).

Academic Integrity

Integrity in academic work is required of all our students. Academic dishonesty is any breach of this integrity, and includes such practices as cheating (the use of unauthorized material on tests and examinations), submitting the same work for different classes without permission of the instructors; using false information (including false references to secondary sources) in an assignment; improper or unacknowledged collaboration with other students, and plagiarism. Tyndale University College & Seminary takes seriously its responsibility to uphold academic integrity, and to penalize academic dishonesty.

Students are encouraged to consult [writing resources](#).

Students should also consult the current [Academic Calendar](#) for academic policies on Academic Honesty, Gender Inclusive Language in Written Assignments, Late Papers and Extensions, Return of Assignments, and Grading System.

Research Ethics

All course-based assignments involving human participants requires ethical review and approval by the [Tyndale Research Ethics Board \(REB\)](#). Check with the Seminary Office (Room B302; aau@tyndale.ca) before proceeding.

G. COURSE EVALUATION

Tyndale Seminary values quality in the courses it offers its students. End-of-course evaluations provide valuable student feedback and are one of the ways that Tyndale Seminary works towards maintaining and improving the quality of courses and the student's learning experience. Student involvement in this process is critical to enhance the general quality of teaching and learning.

Before the end of the course, students will receive a MyTyndale email with a link to the online course evaluation. The link can also be found in the left column on the course page. The evaluation period is 2 weeks; after the evaluation period has ended, it cannot be reopened.

Course Evaluation results will not be disclosed to the instructor before final grades in the course have been submitted and processed. Student names will be kept confidential and the instructor will only see the aggregated results of the class.

IV. COURSE SCHEDULE, CONTENT AND REQUIRED READINGS

Students are expected to do the required reading before each class as outlined below.

May 13 AM	The Enlightenment and Its Understanding of the Human (Preface, <i>On Being Human</i>)
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May 13 PM	Humanity under God (chapt. 1, <i>On Being Human</i>)
May 13 AM	Humanity as creaturely (chapt. 2)
May 13 PM	Humanity as determined by the Word of God (chapt. 3)
May 14 AM	Humanity as determined by the “other” (chapt. 4)
May 14 PM	Humanity as self-determined (chapt. 5)
May 15 AM	The image of God (chapt. 6)
May 15 PM	Human self-contradiction and eschatological resolution (chapt. 7)
May 16 AM	Gender (specificity and complementarity) and its relation to the human (chapt 8)
May 16 PM	The limits to the human creature: birth, historicity and death (chapt. 9) Apparent denials of the human (chapt. 10)

V. COMMENT TOPICS

The understanding of the human in the fiction (novels and/or short stories) of any one of the following:

Hugh MacLennan, Roberston Davies, Brian Moore, Margaret Laurence, Margaret Atwood, Rohinton Mistry, Alice Munro (2013 Nobel Laureate for Literature), Iris Murdoch, John Updike, [or the writer of your choice.]

The understanding of the human in the work of any one major poet; e.g., Seamus Heaney, Margaret Avison, George Bowering, John Steffler, Pierre DesRuisseaux, Georgette LeBlanc [current Poet Laureate of Canada], Ted Hughes, Robert Frost, Andrew Motion, Carol Ann Duffy, Liz Lochhead [current Poet Laureate of U.K.], Vassar Miller, Billy Collins, Louise Glueck, Kay Ryan, W.S. Merwin, Tacy K. Smith [current Poet Laureate of U.S.A.] (Please check with instructor.)

The understanding of the human in the (one) work of one major lyricist; e.g., Bob Dylan, Leonard Cohen, Tom Waits.

The understanding of the human in the film(s) of your choice. (Please check with instructor.)

VI: ESSAY TOPICS

Note: topics marked with an asterisk (*) are research topics. Essays on these topics must include a bibliography of not fewer than four academic references.

A

- 1] theological comment on the humanness of severely mentally ill (i.e., psychotic) people, as well as on the humanness of those who react to them, in any **one** of the following:

I Never Promised You a Rose Garden (Hannah Green)
The Professor and the Madman (Simon Winchester) [biography]
Girl, Interrupted (Susanna Kaysen) [autobiography]
The Center Cannot Hold (Elyn Saks) [autobiography]
Twilight (Elie Wiesel)
Is There No Place on Earth for Me? (Susan Sheehan)
The Bell Jar (Sylvia Plath)
I Know This Much is True (Wally Lamb)

- 2] theological comment on the humanness of severely neurologically damaged people, as well as on the humanness of their helpers, in any three patients discussed in *Awakenings* (Oliver Sacks.) [The “prologue” of *Awakenings* should also be read in conjunction with the case histories of the three patients.]

- 3] theological comment on the humanness of those suffering from Alzheimer’s Disease, together with that of their caregivers:

Still Alice (Lisa Genova)

or

Scar Tissue (Michael Ignatieff)

- 4] theological comment on issues pertaining to the understanding of the human in any **one** of the following:

social-environmental stress: *On the Beach* (Neville Shute)

: *Angela’s Ashes* (Frank McCourt)

: *Alias Grace* (Margaret Atwood)

stress born of dysfunctional communication: *The Trial* (Franz Kafka)

stress with poor provision: *In Cold Blood* (Truman Capote)

: *The Grapes of Wrath* (John Steinbeck)

: *Trespass* (Rose Tremain)

- 5] theological comment on the understanding of the human presupposed in social responses to stress in any **one** of the following:

Asylums (Erving Goffman)

Lord of the Flies (William Golding)

- 6] theological comment on the understanding of the human with respect to suicide:

Night Falls Fast (Kay Redfield Jamison) [This book is a work in social science.]

or

theological comment on issues surrounding suicide following bi-polar mood disorder: *Swing Low: A Life* (Miriam Toews) [This book is biographical, a depiction of her father's upbringing, domestic relationships, church and social environment, and psychiatric decline.]

- 7] theological comment on the understanding of the human as exemplified in community/institution/state-sanctioned violence pertaining to prisons: **one** of
The Enchanted (Rene Denfeld [autobiography/fiction])
Dead Man Walking (Helen Rejean) [biography]
Night (Elie Wiesel) [autobiography]
The House of the Dead (Fyodor Dostoyevsky) [autobiography]
- 8] * a discussion of the *imago Dei* in any **one** of Augustine, Luther, Calvin, Melanchthon, Wesley, Barth, Brunner.
- 9] * the relation of the hamartiological to the human through an investigation of any **one** of the traditional "Seven Deadly Sins": pride, envy, anger, sloth, avarice, gluttony, lust.
- 10] the relation of the holy to the human through an investigation of any **one** of the traditional 'saints': e.g., Augustine, Teresa of Avila, Francis de Sales, Catherine of Siena, John of the Cross, Father Damien, Mother Teresa.
- 11] * a discussion of the theological anthropology of *Life Together* (Dietrich Bonhoeffer).
- 12] * the anthropology embodied in an exegesis of any **one** of:
Genesis 1&2, Genesis 3, Genesis 22, Psalm 25, Psalm 51, Psalm 103, Psalm 139, Ruth.
- 13] the theological anthropology evinced in the Anglican *Book of Common Prayer*.
- 14] * theological discussion of the integration of the human and the sexual.
- 15] theological discussion of the anthropology exemplified in an individual's response to neurological trauma and domestic stress/provision:
Left Neglected (Lisa Genova)
or
social catastrophe (plague): *Year of Wonders* (Geraldine Brooks)
or
personal catastrophe (paralysis): *Under the Eye of the Clock* (Christopher Nolan)
or
relentless personal/natural evil: *All the Little Live Things* (Wallace Stegner.)
- 16] theological discussion of the determination of the human at the hands of institutions, ideologies, images and 'isms': *An Ethic for Christians and Other Aliens in a Strange Land*

(William Stringfellow.) [This book is a thorough examination of the biblical category of 'principalities and powers'.]

- 17] theological discussion and critical assessment of the anthropology reflected in "spiritual direction" in **one** of *Spiritual Friend* (Tilden Edwards); *Soul Friend* (Kenneth Leech)
- 18] theological assessment of the challenge/threat to the human occasioned by 'virtual reality': e.g. *The Extremes* (Christopher Priest)
- 19] a comparison of Hellenistic and Hebraic anthropologies:
e.g., *Hebrew Thought Compared with Greek* (Thorleif Boman)
e.g., *Anthropology of the Old Testament* (Hans Walter Wolff)
- 20] theological comment on the threat to the human posed by disinformation: *Propaganda* (Jacques Ellul.)
- 21] theological comment on the relation of the imaginative to the human: *The Educated Imagination* (Northrop Frye)
- 22] theo-anthropology in the context of depression: *Darkness Visible: A Memoir of Madness* (William Styron) **and** *Malignant Sadness: The Anatomy of Depression* (Lewis Wolpert.)
- 23] theo-anthropology in the context of bi-polar affective disorder [manic-depressive illness]
A Brilliant Madness: Living with Manic-Depressive Illness (Patty Duke and Gloria Hochman) [autobiography]
or
An Unquiet Mind (Kay Redfield Jamison) [autobiography]
- 24] theological reflection on the presence of bi-polar affective disorder among the culturally creative: *Touched with Fire: Manic-Depressive Illness and the Artistic Temperament* (Kay Redfield Jamison)
- 25] theological comment on the challenge to and triumph of the human amidst totalitarianism:
e.g., *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* (Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn) [fiction]
or
Ordinary Lives (Josef Skvorecky) [fiction]
- 26] theological comment on the retention of the human amidst organ transplants and genetic engineering: e.g., *The Human Body Shop: The Engineering and Marketing of Life* (Andrew Kimbrell.)

- 27] theological comment on the nature and significance of the human in perpetrator and pardoner: e.g., *The Sunflower: On the Possibilities and Limits of Forgiveness* (Simon Wiesenthal)
- 28] theological comment on the “ordinary” human face of radical evil:
e.g., *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil* (Hannah Arendt)
- 29] theological comment on the latent anthropology in
(a) women’s (self-)victimization in love- affairs:
Labyrinth of Desire: Women, Passion and Romantic Obsession (Rosemary Sullivan)
[non-fiction]
or
Other Women (Evelyn Lau) [fiction]
or
(b) married women’s victimization at the hands of an unfaithful husband:
“The Woman Destroyed” in *The Woman Destroyed* (Simone de Beauvoir)
- 30] theological exploration of the dimensions of the human reflected in the microcosm of a rural congregation:
Open Secrets: A Spiritual Journey through a Country Church (Richard Lischer)
[biography]
- 31] theological comment on the funeral director’s angle-of-vision on death and its aftermath:
The Undertaking: Life Studies from the Dismal Trade (Thomas Lynch) [biography]
- 32] theological assessment of war-intensified human cruelty/complexity: e.g.,
Resistance (Anita Shreve) [fiction]
or
Crimes of War (Peter Hogg) [fiction]
or
Wolfsangel: A German City on Trial 1945-1948 (August Nigro) [history]
or
Charlie Johnson in the Flames (Michael Ignatieff) [fiction]
or
March (Geraldine Brooks) [fiction]
- 33] theological comment on psychological resilience amidst betrayal and abandonment:
White Oleander (Janet Fitch)
- 34] theological comment on survivors of
(a) sexual violation (rape): *Lucky* (Alice Sebold) [autobiography]
or
(b) marital rape/domestic abuse/sexual complicity/self-complication: *Strange Fits of Passion* (Anita Shreve) [fiction]

35] theological comment on the multidimensionality/complexity of the human being: biological, psychological (including the pathological,) social, political, familial, spiritual:

Good Harbor (Anita Diamant)

or

Border Crossing (Pat Barker)

or

Trespass (Rose Tremain)

or

Bedlam (Greg Hollingshead)

or

South of Broad (Pat Conroy)

or

Prince of Tides (Pat Conroy)

36] theological comment on the psychological and spiritual anguish pertaining to the death of a child: *The Blood of the Lamb* (Peter DeVries)

37] theological comment on issues pertaining to self-willed human complication; e.g., marital infidelity and criminality:

Adultery (Richard Wright)

or

A Paris Affair (Tatiana de Rosnay) [short stories]

or

The Pilot's Wife (Anita Shreve)

or

Fortune's Rocks (Anita Shreve)

or

Light on Snow (Anita Shreve)

38] theological comment on human complexity complicated by indecisiveness:

A Prayer for the Dying (Steward O'Nan)

39] theological comment on the shrivelled humanness evident in religious fundamentalism:

A Complicated Kindness (Miriam Toews)

40] theological comment on the complexity of intra-family dynamics and the ambiguities of fortuitous occurrences:

Punishment (Linden MacIntyre)

or

The Children Act (Ian McEwan)

or

Saturday (Ian McEwan)

or

Atonement (Ian McEwan)

or

After This (Alice McDermott)

41] theological comment on the “handicapped” person (deafness) and the “handicap” of “normalcy”: *Deafening* (Frances Itani) [fiction]

or

theological comment on the anguish of severe physical/mental deformity and on the anguish of parents/caregivers: *The Boy in the Moon* (Ian Brown) [biography]

42] theological comment on the damage wrought by ambition:

All He Ever Wanted to Be (Anita Shreve) [fiction]

43] theological comment on the religious issues apparent in the intersection of Jew, Christian and Muslim: *The Terrorist* (John Updike) [fiction]

44] theological comment on a widow’s grieving:

The Year of Magical Thinking (Joan Didion) [autobiography]

45] theological reflection on suffering. (The student should engage theologically Stanley Hauerwas, *God, Medicine, and Suffering*.)

46] theological interaction with and comment upon the work of a major existentialist thinker; e.g., *The Fall* or *The Plague* (Albert Camus) [fiction]

47] theological interaction with and comment on (African-North American) slavery:

e.g., *The Book of Negroes* (Lawrence Hill) [fiction]

48] theological reflection on “the commonwealth of Israel...the covenants of promise...the broken wall of hostility...one new person in place of the two” (Eph. 2:14-16)

A Woman In Jerusalem (A.B. Yehoshua) [fiction]

49] theological reflection on the ripple effect of sin:

Testimony (Anita Shreve) [fiction]

50] theological comment on the complexities of sexual abuse in the church:

The Bishop’s Man (Linden MacIntyre) [fiction]

51] exploration of theological/vocational/personal issues in ordained ministry:

Abide With Me (Elizabeth Strout) [fiction]

52] theological comment on the suffering perpetrated by the Shoah, with reference to the irrevocability of God’s covenant with Israel:

Night (Elie Wiesel) [autobiography]

or

Sarah's Key (Tatiana de Rosnay) [fiction]

or

The Drowned and the Saved (Primo Levi) [autobiography]

53] exposition of the tragedy of amnesia and the cruciality of memory – remembering and forgetting – in personal identity, self-perception, and behaviour consistent with one's nature:

Before I Go to Sleep (S.J. Watson) [fiction]

* In addition the student should probe the biblical significance of remembering and forgetting, both human and divine. (What happens when God remembers? when God forgets?)

54] theological comment on the physicality of the human body, embodiment, and the church as body of Christ:

Let the Bones Dance: Embodiment and the Body of Christ (Marcia Shoop)

55] theological comment on the dystopia occasioned by affluence and the collapse of social restraint:

Cocaine Nights (J.G. Ballard) [fiction]

56] theological comment on degradation and the triumph of grace amidst horrific suffering:

Unbroken (Laura Hillenbrand) [biography]

57] theological comment on issues surrounding eating disorders:

Wasted (Marya Hornbacher) [autobiography]

* In addition the student should probe the biblical significance of eating, drinking, and private and public meals.

58] theological comment on ingrained racial prejudice (anti-Japanese) and its implications for individuals and society in North America:

Snow Falling on Cedars (David Guterson)

[Note: this work of fiction is especially rich in biblical imagery.]

59] theological comment on one's responses to one's awareness of one's death; e.g., a physician's response to his terminal illness:

East of the Mountains (David Guterson) [fiction]

60] theological comment on the imprecision, ambiguities and arbitrariness of the criminal justice system:

Border Crossing (Pat Barker) [fiction]

or

A Death in Belmont (Sebastian Junger) [documentary]

61] theological comment on the nature of prostitution: its exploitation, perversity and degradation:

Paid For (Rachel Moran) [autobiography]

62] theological comment on a psychiatrist's criticism of 'totalistic' psychology:

Admirable Evasions: How Psychology Undermines Morality (Theodore Dalrymple)

[This brief book is crucial for all practitioners of psychology and psychotherapy.]

63] theological comment on the nature and cruelty of social stigma (leprosy):

The Pearl Diver (Jeff Talarigo)

64] theological comment on autism, and the stress/suffering it precipitates in child and parents:

Love Anthony (Lisa Genova) [fiction]

65] theological comment on Huntington's disease, and the stress/suffering it precipitates in the victim and the victim's family:

Inside the O'Briens (Lisa Genova) [fiction]

66] theological comment on the evil of tribalism, blood-myth anti-semitism, and one's victimization visited on others:

The Nature of Blood (Caryl Phillips) [fiction]

67] theological comment on the inextricable intertwining of woundedness and sin, pain and perversity, deprivation and depravity, found in all people.

The Italian Girl (Irish Murdoch) [fiction]

68] theological comment on the pervasiveness, profundity, perversity and ubiquity of humankind's dark heart.

Heart of Darkness (Joseph Conrad) [fiction]

B

1] * an exposition and critical assessment of **one** crucial aspect of any one psychological anthropology in the light of Christian anthropology:

e.g., Freud, Jung, Adler, James. (Please check with instructor.)

2] * exposition and critical assessment of (an aspect of) any **one** philosophical anthropology in the light of Christian anthropology:

e.g., Plato, Stoicism, Aristotle, Plotinus, Aquinas, Occam, Biel, Descartes, Kant, Hegel, Marx, Sartre, Heidegger. (Please check with instructor.)

- 3] * an exposition and critical assessment of the understanding of the human (or aspect thereof) in any **one** of Mediaeval Scholasticism, the Renaissance, the Enlightenment, Existentialism.

C

- 1] a discussion of the anthropology reflected in the “anti-psychiatry” movement (e.g., Thomas Szasz, MD, *The Myth of Mental Illness* -- pp. ix - 110, plus 204-220.)
[Note: there are now many psychiatrist-authored books and journal articles written from the standpoint of ‘anti-psychiatry.’ Please check with instructor. This topic is best addressed by students with formal medical training.]
- 2] an examination of the command and claim of God upon humans reflected in *Fear and Trembling* (Soren Kierkegaard.)
[Note: this topic should be attempted only by those who have been exposed to the philosophy of Georg Friedrich Hegel.]
- 3] an exposition of and comment on *Persons In Communion: Trinitarian Description and Human Participation* (Alan J. Torrance)
[Note: this topic is to be attempted only by the advanced student in theology who is acquainted with the theological subtleties of Barth and the Torrance echelon.]
- 4] a discussion of the “dialogical” in *I and Thou* (Martin Buber.)
[Note: this topic should be attempted only by those with more than elementary philosophical training.]
- 5] theological comment on Stephen P. Kiernan’s *The Hummingbird* [fiction] as an illustration of
Karl Barth’s ‘The light and the lights’ in *Church Dogmatics*, IV, 3, part 1, pp.86-165.
[Note: this topic should be attempted only by those with a previous exposure to Barth.]

D

{a topic of the student’s choice, provided that the instructor has approved it.}

VII. SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

(Tyndale Library supports this course with [e-journals and e-books](#). See the [Library FAQ page](#).)