



TYNDALE

• SEMINARY •

Course Syllabus

WINTER 2020

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY: FAITH SEEKING UNDERSTANDING

THEO 0531

(SECTION 1)

JANUARY 13 – APRIL 6

MONDAYS, 11:15 AM – 2:00 PM

INSTRUCTOR: DENNIS K. P. NGIEN, PhD

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Office Hours (Rm. C403):

By Appointment via email

Access course material at <http://classes.tyndale.ca/>

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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

Equips students to use the tools of systematic theology to understand, proclaim, and live the Christian faith today. We will address such questions as: How can we know God, and how do we adjudicate truth claims about God? How can God be both one and three? How can Jesus be both divine and human? Who is the Holy Spirit and how does the Spirit's work relate to that of the Father and Son? How does theological knowledge impact our day-to-day lives in the church and in the world?

Prerequisites: HIST 0561 or HIST 0562

II. LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

1. Analyze the interconnection and cohesion of Christian doctrines and apply implications for Christian life, vocation, and mission.
2. Evaluate intelligently, graciously, and critically the theological ideas and writings of others, and articulate your own positions in a manner that is informed, coherent, winsome, and charitable.
3. Distinguish between the essentials and non-essentials of the Christian faith through deeper and broader exposure to the historic Christian Tradition.
4. Effectively identify, assess, and analyze theological sources through electronic library research tools.
5. Express their love for God and their worship of God through deeper and more integrated knowledge of God.

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. REQUIRED READING:

Basil of Caesarea. *On the Holy Spirit*. Popular Patristics. Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2011. ISBN 9780881418767.

McGrath, Alister E. *Christian Theology: An Introduction*. Sixth edition. Chichester, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2016. ISBN: 9781118869574 (hereafter CT).

McGrath, Alister E. *Christian Theology Reader*. 5th edition. Chichester, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2017. ISBN: 9781118874387 (hereafter CTR)

Other assigned readings will be available via the course page.

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

1. Preliminary Research Assignment (10%; Due Feb., 3): This assignment will prepare students for the final research paper and provide an opportunity for the instructor to give students feedback and direction.

- Find two encyclopedia entries on a major theologian or a major theological issue (lists to be provided)
- If you choose a theologian, identify two or three major issues they addressed. If you choose an issue, identify two or three major thinkers who have addressed the issue
- From the above, choose one issue you would like to address, and one thinker who you would like to read on that topic; then, state your topic in the form of a research question, and provide a tentative answer
- Find eight or more good quality academic sources on the proposed topic; sources must include at least three academic journal articles, at least one academic monograph, and relevant sources from the major thinker in question as per the proposed topic

2. Reading reflection papers (30%; no more than 3 pages each x 2; Due: assigned reading dates):

Of the seven dates listed below, chose **two** on which to submit a reflection on that date's topic (so 2 papers total). Drawing on and interacting with the reading sources assigned that day, write your own theological response to the question or issue being addressed. Be clear and concise. Dates & topics include:

- i) **Jan., 27:** What role should Tradition play in in theology? Include one paragraph reflecting on the implications of this for your own theological development.
- ii) **Feb., 10:** What important contributions does reason or experience (choose one) make to theological knowledge? What are the limitations of that source for doing theology?
- iii) **Feb., 24:** How might a trinitarian, participatory model of ministry, impacts your approach to worship, or pastoral ministry, or Christian community, or social justice, or mission, or vocation (or some other aspect of Christian life and witness)? As part of answering this question, you might reflect on how such theology corrects or affirms your (or your church's) present practice.
- iv) **Mar. 9:** Write a reflection on one aspect or issue related to the Person of the Holy Spirit that interests you from the readings.
- v) **Mar., 16:** Write a reflection on whether incarnation is necessary to salvation.
- vi) **Mar. 23:** How is our salvation (our 'being saved') related to creation and new creation?
- vii) **Apr., 6:** Of the atonement theologies discussed, which one do you find to be most important and/or helpful and why? Which do you find least helpful and why? [In answering this question, offer theological reflection based on Scripture (interpreted in light of tradition, reason, and experience), not just personal preference or 'gut' response'].

3. A Shorter Summary Paper: Caesarea's doctrine of Holy Spirit (20%; Due Feb., 25)

Students are required to read and provide no more 6 double-spaced page summary of Basil of Caesarea. *On the Holy Spirit*. Popular Patristics. Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2011. ISBN 978-0881418767.

As summary contents, students should include these aspects: (a) a summary of the status of the Holy Spirit? Is he of the same substance with the Father and the Son? (b) the operations of the Holy Spirit; and (c) in what sense is the Holy Spirit “worshipped and glorified”? and finally (d) How does Holy Spirit aid in our worship? (e) In what way is our worship Trinitarian and efficacious?

4. Short Research Paper (10-12 pages, 40%; Due Mar., 31 11:55 PM (Eastern Time)): Students will write a 10 to 12-paged research paper on the topic proposed in assignment 1 above. Students should consult **at least 8** good quality academic sources beyond the course materials. The research paper should demonstrate thoughtful reflection, critical analysis, and should embody a conceptual argument (thesis) in which various angles of the topic are explored in fairness. Course lectures and readings will serve as a starting point, but students should engage **at least 8** other academic sources in writing this paper, including academic journal articles and at least 1 theological monograph (a major work by a theologian). Be sure to consult the detailed *Grading Grid* and the *Research Paper Instructions* documents posted in Moodle. Read and follow these documents carefully at the beginning of your research and again when you being writing your paper.

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:

Assignment	Weighting	Due Date
Preliminary Research Assignment	10%	Feb.,03
2 Reading reflections	30%	See 2, Section C
Summary Paper	20%	Mar.,09
Research Paper	40%	Mar., 31
Total Grade	100 %	

F. GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR THE SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN WORK

Assignments are to be uploaded to the assignment submission section of the course page in pdf or Microsoft Word format by 11:55 PM (Eastern Time) on the assigned due date. Papers submitted after 11:55 PM on the due date will receive a 1/3 grade deduction (i.e., B+ to B) for each day (or part thereof) following the due date. This late policy will apply to all assignments for which no extension has been granted. Extensions will be granted only for serious personal, family, or health situations.

Assignments should be double-spaced, in 12 pt Times New Roman font, with 1" margins. The standard citation method for theological papers is **footnotes with a complete bibliography** in the **Chicago style**, as explained in the [popular guidebook written by Kate L. Turabian](#). For proper citation format, consult the "[Turabian Citation Quick Guide](#)" (follow style for notes ("N") and bibliography ("B")), or see the complete [Chicago Manual of Style online \(Tyndale e-resource\)](#), especially [ch. 14](#). For citing scripture texts, refer to sections [10.44 to 10.48](#) and [14.238 to 14.241](#).

The bibliographic software **Zotero** is recommended as a helpful citation tool which will save time and help to ensure that proper formatting is followed (available free at www.zotero.org).

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 Services](#).

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 may require 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

Jan. 13 & 20: Sources and Methods of Theology; theology as faith seeking understanding

- (a) Nature and Task of Theology; Reasons and limitations of doing theology;
- (b) Defining and the architecture of theology (CT pp. 85-119);
- (c) Scripture: authority and inspiration (CT pp.104-121);
- (d) Tradition: apostolic, dual-source and the Anabaptists rejection (CT pp.122-127);
- (e) Reason: Tertullian vs. Augustine (CT pp.127--130).
- (f) Experience: two models and Feuerbach's critique (CT pp.130-134);

Reading: Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*, 1-25 (online).

Readings from CTR: part 1 & part 2.

Jan. 27; Feb.,03: The Doctrines of Revelation and God

- (a) Models of revelation (CT pp.137-141);
- (b) Natural Theology (CT pp.141-148);
- (c) Proofs of God's existence (CT pp.155-163);
- (d) Language about God: God-talk (CT pp.163-170);
- (e) God as a person: Buber's 'I-thou' (CT pp.175-187);
- (f) Impassibility vs. passibility (CT pp.181-208);
- (g) Omnipotence and two powers (CT pp. 187-190).

Readings from CTR: part 3.

Feb. 10; Feb., 17 (No class); Feb. 24: The Doctrine of the Trinity

- (a) General Survey of the Doctrine (CT pp.299-308).
- (b) Heresies: Tri-theism, Gnosticism, Arianism & Modalism (CT pp.308-310);
- (c) Making sense of the Trinity: Cappadocian Fathers, Augustine, Barth, Jenson, (CT pp.311-257);
- (d) Patrispassianism/Theopaschitism (CT pp.206-207).
- (e) The Implications of the Trinity: Mission, worship, atonement and ecclesiology (CT pp. 323-325).

Readings from CTR: Part 3.

Supplemental Readings: Thompson, "The Triune God and Mission," and "The Trinity, Society, and Politics," in *Modern Trinitarian Perspectives* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 68-93, 106- 123. James B. Torrance, "Worship – Unitarian or Trinitarian?" in *Worship, Community & the Triune God of Grace* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 19-41. C. Rosalee

Velloso Ewell, "Learning to See Jesus with the Eyes of the Spirit: The Unlikely Prophets of God's Reign," in *The Trinity Among the Nations: The Doctrine of God in the Majority World*, ed. Gene L. Green, Stephen T. Pardue, and K. K. Yeo (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015), 86-99.

Mar. 2: The Doctrine of Holy Spirit: East and West

- (a) Basil on the Holy Spirit (CT pp.281-285; Basil, *On the Holy Spirit*, 1-122);
- (b) Augustine's *Filioque* controversy: The Spirit proceeds from the Father "and the Son" (CT pp.247-249).
- (c) Functions of the Spirit (CT pp.294-298):

Readings from CTR: part 3.

Supplemental Reading: Thomas Oden, "The Person of the Holy Spirit," in *Classic Christianity: A Systematic Theology* (San Francisco: HarperOne, 2009), 513-525.

Mar. 9 and 16: The Doctrine of the Person of Christ

- (a) Patristic Christology, union and distinction (CT pp.214-223);
- (b) Medieval Christology: Incarnation and the Fall (CT pp. 224-225)
- (b) Luther and *Communicatio idiomatum* (CT pp.223--224);
- (d) Correspondence between the Person and Work of Christ (CT pp. 225-226)
- (e) Kenotic Christology (CT pp. 235-236)

Readings from CTR: part 4

Recommended: Thompson, chapter 3, "A Trinitarian Theology of Cross and Resurrection."

Mar. 23 & 30: Creation, Fall and Theodicies

- (a) Creation in Augustine (CT pp.197-198)
- (b) Creation ex-nihilo and pre-existent matter (CT pp.198-199)
- (b) God as Creator and the implications of God's creation (CT pp.199-200)
- (c) Models of God as Creator (CT pp.200-201)
- (d) Humanity in God's image (CT pp.327-329)
- (e) The nature of sin (CT pp.329-333)
- (f) Evil and theodicies: Irenaeus and Augustine (CT pp.202-204)

Readings from CTR: part 3, and part 6.1-18.

Apr. 6: Atonement, Justification, and Grace: The work of Christ as the ground of our salvation; atonement and justification; eschatological aspect of salvation

- (a) The cross as sacrifice (CT pp.251-255);
- (b) The cross as a victory (CT pp.255-259);
- (c) The cross as satisfaction (CT pp.259-264);
- (d) The cross as a demonstration of God's love (CT pp.264-268);
- (e) Pelagian controversy on grace (CT pp.330-334);

- (f) Reformation and Council of Trent's understanding of grace (CT pp.337-344);
- (g) Predestination models: Augustine, Calvin, Arminius and Barth (CT pp.344-349);
- (h) The scope of Salvation (CT pp.277-279);
- (i) Eschatological Aspect of Salvation (CT pp.250-251)

Readings from CTR: parts 5 & 6.

V. SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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

NB: Tyndale Library has an excellent collection of eBooks (including many of the items listed below), which can be accessed remotely from your home computer (with login). Tyndale's eBooks can be found through the [library catalogue](#).

Systematic Theology

Barth, Karl. *Church Dogmatics*. trans ed. G. W. Bromiley and T. F. Torrance. 13 vols. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1957-1975. (Reformed; Swiss)

_____. *Dogmatics in Outline*. trans. G. T. Thomson. London: SCM, 1949.

Bird, Michael F. *Evangelical Theology: A Biblical and Systematic Introduction*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013.

Bloesch, Donald G. *Christian Foundations*. 7 Volumes. Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, 1992–2006. (Evangelical; ecumenical; Barthian)

Calvin, John. *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. Translated by Henry Beveridge. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989. (Reformed)

Erickson, Millard. *Christian Theology*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1998. (Broadly Baptist, Evangelical; USA)

Finger, Thomas N. *A Contemporary Anabaptist Theology: biblical, historical, constructive*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2004. (Contemporary Anabaptist)

Franke, John R. *The Character of Theology: An Introduction to its Nature, Task, and Purpose*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2005. (Reformed, postmodern)

Grenz, Stanley J. [Theology for the Community of God](#). Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994. (Baptist)

[Grudem, Wayne A. Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine](#). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994 (Conservative Evangelical; Reformed; USA).

Hall, Douglas John. *Christian Theology in a North American Context*. 3 vols. (*Thinking the Faith, Professing the Faith, Confessing the Faith*). Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 1989, 1993, 1996. (Lutheran; Canadian).

Horton, Stanley, ed. *Systematic Theology*. Rev. ed. Springfield, MS: Logion, 1995. (Pentecostal)

Jenson, Robert. *Systematic Theology*. 2 vols. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997, 1999. (Lutheran)

- Jones, Beth Felker. *Practicing Christian Doctrine: An Introduction to Thinking and Living Theologically*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014.
- Larsen, Timothy, and Daniel J. Treier. *The Cambridge Companion to Evangelical Theology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
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- Macchia, Frank D. *Baptized in the Spirit: A Global Pentecostal Theology*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005. (Pentecostal)
- McClendon, James Wm., Jr. *Systematic Theology*. 3 vols. [*Ethics, Doctrine, Witness*] Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2002, 1996, 2000. (Baptist)
- McDermott, Gerald. *The Oxford Handbook of Evangelical Theology*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.
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- Pannenberg, Wolfhart, [*Systematic Theology*](#). 3 vols. Trans. G. W. Bromiley. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991, 1994, 1998. (Lutheran; German)
- Pelikan, Jaroslav. *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine*. 5 vols. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971. (Lutheran; USA)
- Peters, Ted. *God: The World's Future: Systematic Theology for a New Era*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2000. (Lutheran; conversant with faith-science discussions)
- Placher, William C, ed. *Essentials of Christian Theology*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2003.
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- Shepherd, Victor. *Our Evangelical Faith*. Toronto: Clements Academic, 2006.
- Sobrino, Jon and Ignacio Ellacuría, eds. *Systematic Theology: Perspectives from Liberation Theology*. Maryknoll: Orbis, 1996. (Liberation, Roman Catholic, Latin American)
- Tanner, Kathryn. *Jesus, Humanity and the Trinity: A Brief Systematic Theology*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001.
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Revelation, Scripture, Theological Method & Sources

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The Doctrine of God, Trinity

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Tyndale's MTS Modular program has an excellent online [Christian Theology Reading Room](#), which has extensive links to material available as full text eBooks, as well as partial-text books available on Google Books. Reading rooms have also been established on the [Doctrine of the Trinity](#), as well as theologians [Dietrich Bonhoeffer](#), [Eberhard Jüngel](#), [John Howard Yoder](#), [Jürgen Moltmann](#), and [Karl Barth](#).

To search topically for relevant journal articles, book reviews or collected essays, use the comprehensive *ATLA Religion Database*, or the *Proquest Religious Database*, *Religious and Theological Abstracts* and *JSTOR*. [Full-text versions of many theological journals](#) and book reviews can be downloaded from these databases.

For **detailed bibliographies** to support *Christian Theology: An Introduction*, a **glossary** of theological terms, and **details of theologians** from *The Christian Theology Reader*, cf. www.wiley.com/mcgrath