Course Description

A survey of Christian thought from 100 CE to 1600 CE. The thought of influential leaders (including Ignatius, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Clement, Origen, Cyprian, Cappadocian Fathers, Desert Mothers and Fathers, Augustine, Chrysostom, John of Damascus, Anselm, Bernard, Aquinas, Gregory of Palamas, Julian of Norwich, Hus, Luther, Calvin, Zwingli, and the Anabaptists), Ecumenical Councils and the division between East and West is studied in view of the theological development of Christian thought. Themes are studied in their historical development, including apologetics & philosophy, scripture & tradition, heresy and Gnosticism, Trinitarianism, Christology, ecclesiology, soteriology, anthropology, and the sacraments, and in terms of their significance for the contemporary church.

1. To engage in theological discussion in the context of historical thought.

2. To investigate and discover the theological method and significant themes of historical persons.

3. To understand and explain the significance of historical theology for the contemporary church.

4. To think both theologically and historically about major themes in the Christian tradition.

5. To subject our own theological method and views to the critique of previous theologians.

6. To explain the dynamic of theological development in the history of Christian thought.
Course Textbooks


Course Requirements

1. Class Participation. 10% of your course grade.

   The class participates through the use of Blackboard that is accessible through MyLipscomb at [http://my.lipscomb.edu/cp/home/login](http://my.lipscomb.edu/cp/home/login). Weekly assignments are posted on the Blackboard as well as the readings.

2. Historical-Theological Papers (60% of your grade)
You are required to write two papers. Each paper should be between 2200-2500 words.

Choose at least one Christian author from A.D. 100-1000 and one Christian author from A.D. 1000-1600. You are not limited to the authors we study in this course. You may select other writers or theologians that interest you. However, check with the instructor for permission and assistance.

Your paper should be a reflection on a particular theological theme within a particular writing by a specific writer (e.g., the concept of merit in the *Summa* of Thomas Aquinas, or predestination in Zwingli’s *Providence of God*, or the role of the “Jesus Prayer” in the spirituality of Gregory of Palamas in his *Philokalia*). Reading the primary source material is absolutely essential.

In addition, you must utilize at least five secondary sources (a mix of monographs and peer-reviewed journal articles) that are specific interpretations of this topic in relation to the author you are reading.

The paper should (1) identify the significance of the topic in historical theology; (2) describe the author’s view; and (3) comment on the contemporary significance of the topic for theology and/or church practice.

The first paper is due on **October 31 at 11:59pm (CST)** and the second on **November 28 at 11:59pm (CST)**. All late papers are automatically reduced by one letter grade per week for each week late.

3. One Comprehensive Exam (30% of grade).

There is one comprehensive exam in the last week of the course. The final exam will ask you to integrate the material of the course in a comprehensive manner. It will ask to trace a theological theme or topic through the course material, both the primary and secondary source material. It will ask you to make a contemporary application of your historical understanding. It will ask you to evaluate some specific primary course readings. So, it is important to keep up with the readings and think about the topics below as you read. Watch for the following themes as you read the primary and secondary materials:
a. Hermeneutics: How Should the Bible be read?
b. Doctrine of God: How is God conceived?
c. Christology: Who is Jesus Christ?
d. Trinitarianism: What is the Nature of the Trinity?
e. Anthropology: What are the Effects of Sin on Human Nature?
f. Soteriology: What is the Nature and Role of Faith in Justification and Sanctification?
g. Ecclesiology: What is the Nature of the Church?
h. Baptism: What is the Soteriological Meaning of Baptism?
i. Lord’s Supper: What is the Theological Function of the Lord’s Supper?
j. Spirituality: How is it Formed and Experienced?
j. Eschatology: What is the Nature of Eschatological Reality?

Contact Information

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Course Notifications

Academic Integrity Policy

This is a course designed to integrate one’s experience of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in such a way that, by word and deed, the gospel is proclaimed to others. For that reason, academic integrity and excellence in effort is expected of every student. As your instructor, I will deal with each student fairly and honestly. As students, you are expected to do your own work on tests and oral presentations unless I indicate that collaboration is allowed on a specific assignment. Penalties for integrity violations will range from failure on the assignment involved to failure in the course. As your instructor, I reserve the right to report violations to members of the administration. For clarification, refer to the university's Code of Conduct and the Academic Integrity Policy.

Students Requiring Accommodations

If you require accommodations for a documented disability, please discuss your circumstances with me immediately. If you are entitled to accommodations but have not yet registered with the Counseling Center, please contact that office immediately (phone # 615-279-1781).

Dropping the Course
A student's decision to stop attending class does NOT constitute dropping the course. A drop/add form (available in the Registrar’s office) must be signed by the teacher and processed in the Registrar's office before the drop is official.

NOTE: If your name appears on the roster at grading time and you have not officially dropped the course, you will be assigned a grade based on the policies outlined in this syllabus.

**Course Schedule**

All readings will be posted on Blackboard or links provided.

**Aug 18-22**  Introduction to Historical Theology

Gonzalez, 13-15
Hicks, “Why Care about Church History or Historical Theology,”  

**Aug 25-29**  Three Early Syrian Voices: Ignatius, the Didache and the Gospel of Thomas

*Cloud of Witnesses*, chapters 1 & 2.
Didache (http://www.zdziarski.com/papers/Didache-Zdziarski.pdf) or  
(http://www.ccel.org/ccel/richardson/fathers.viii.i.i.html)
Gospel of Thomas (http://www.gnosis.org/naghamm/gosthom.html or  
http://www.murple.net/thomas/thomas_coptic.html) or  
http://users.misericordia.edu/davies/thomas/Trans.htm
Ephesus (http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0104.htm)  
Rome (http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0107.htm)  
Smyrna (http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0109.htm)

**Sep 1-5**  Alexandrian Theology (Early Platonic Theology)

Gonzalez, pp.1-32.  
*Cloud of Witnesses*, chapters 3 & 4.  
Justin Martyr's First Apology (http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0126.htm)  
Origen, On First Principles, Preface (http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/04120.htm)  
and Book II (http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/04122.htm)

**Sep 8-12**  North African Theology (Early Latin Theology)

Gonzalez, 34-64.  
*Cloud of Witnesses*, chapters 7, 14-15.  
Tertullian  
Cyprian, On the Unity of the Catholic Church,
http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0507.htm (Treatise I on the website)

Sep 15-19 Asiatic Theology (Early Greek Theology)

Gonzalez, pp. 65-90
_Cloud of Witnesses_, chapter 16.
Gnostic Texts:
  b. The Gospel of Philip; http://www.gnosis.org/naghamm/gop.html
Irenaeus, _Against Heresies_,
  d. Book III, Preface; http://www.ccel.org/fathers2/ANF-01/anf01-60.htm#P7300_1937880
  e. Book III, Chapters 1-5; http://www.ccel.org/fathers2/ANF-01/anf01-60.htm#P7300_1937880
_Irenaeus, The Apostolic Preaching of the Gospel;
http://www.ccel.org/ccel/irenaeus/demonstr.preaching_the_demonstration_of_the_apostolic_preaching.html_

Sep 22-26 Trinitarian Controversy

_Trinitarian Controversy_
_Cloud of Witnesses_, chapters 5-6.
Many Mansions, chapters 7, 10.

Sep 29-Oct 3 Christological Controversy

_Christological Controversy_
_Cloud of Witnesses_, chapters 8-11

Oct 6-10 Theological Anthropology

_Theological Anthropology_
_Cloud of Witnesses_, chapter 12.
Many Mansions, chapter 17.

Oct 13-17 Eastern Monasticism and Spirituality

Many Mansions, chapters 3, 8-9, 14
Desert Mothers and Fathers, _Apopthegmata Patrum_
http://www.mtholyoke.edu/courses/cstraw/PrimaryDocuments/ExcerptsfromtheA
Gregory of Nyssa, “On Perfection”
http://www.sage.edu/faculty/salomd/nyssa/
Dionysius the Areopagite, “Mystical Theology”
http://www.esoteric.msu.edu/VolumeII/MysticalTheology.html
John of Damascus, “On Holy Images” (on his part, not quotations from Fathers)
http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/johndamascus-images.html

Oct 20-24  Western Monasticism and Spirituality

Many Mansions, chapters 1-2, 4-5
“Rule of St. Benedict”
http://www.osb.org/rb/text/toc.html#toc
http://newadvent.org/summa/1.htm

Oct 27-31  No Online Assignments: Paper Due Oct 31 at 11:59pm.

Nov 3-7  Scholastic, Mystical and Vernacular Theology

Many Mansions, 4-5, 11-12. 15-16
Clouds of Witnesses, chapters 13.
Reformation Theology, chapters 1-4
Anselm, “Why God Became Man,” Books I & II
http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/anselm-curdeus.html
http://www.ccel.org/ccel/julian/revelations.html

Nov 10-14  Lutheran Theology

Reformation Theology, chapters 5-6, 16-17
Martin Luther
"95 Theses" (1517)
http://www.iclnet.org/pub/resources/text/wittenberg/luther/web/ninetyfive.html
“Sermon on Threefold Righteousness”(1518)
http://www.iclnet.org/pub/resources/text/wittenberg/luther/web/3formsr.html
"Baptism," Large Catechism
“Sacrament of the Altar,” Large Catechism

Augsburg Confession (1530; articles 2, 4, 6, 9, 10, 18, 20)
http://www.ctsfw.edu/etext/boc/ac/

Council of Trent, "On Justification" (1547)
http://history.hanover.edu/early/trent/ct06d1.htm

Nov. 17-21  Reformed Theology (Zwingli and Calvin)

Reformation Theology, chapters 8-10
Ulrich Zwingli
“A Short Exposition of the Faith” (1531)

“Sixty-Seven Articles” (1523)
http://web.highland.net/~jwest/67.pdf

Jean Calvin
“Institute of the Christian Religion” (1559), Book II, 17; Book III, 24; Book IV, 17.
http://www.ccel.org/cCEL/calvin/institutes.toc.html

“Geneva Confession” (1559)
http://www.creeds.net/reformed/frconf.htm

Nov 24-28  NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

Dec 1-5  Anabaptist Theology

Reformation Theology, chapter 15.
Schleitheim Confession
Introduction by John Howard Yoder.

Confession Itself
http://www.mcusa-archives.org/library/resolutions/schleithiem/cover-intro.html (use the left menu to read each article, seven total)

Menno Simon
“A Fundamental and Clear Confession of the Poor and Distressed Christians”
http://www.mennosimons.net/fulltext.html (scroll down to the title listed above)