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Christology TH600/700

Fall 2016

1. PURPOSE: The centre of Christian theology is Jesus Christ. Therefore, this course will focus on thinking through the scriptural and ecclesiastical traditions concerning the person and work of Christ. This will provide the basis for a discussion about the implication of Christology for the present and future Church. Thus, the course will seek to engage the ideas represented by the councils, creeds of past theologians, and then move to examine the theological praxis that resulted in a colonial and post-colonial context. All this in hopes of the learner developing a shared praxis based upon a renewed Christology.

1.1 PREREQUISITES: TH500 Introduction to Constructive Theology

2. COMPETENCE OBJECTIVES:

2.1. Identify, describe and understand the students own cultural affirmations of Christology, the place of ritual, song, metaphor and story in the student's own Christological position.

2.2. Identify and articulate the student's own understanding as it relates to the larger communities in which the student finds her/himself.

2.3. Describe, understand and put into one's own terms the basic formulations of the Christian tradition (the creeds) concerning Christological understanding and how these have been operative in the Christian experiences in a variety of cultural contexts.

2.4. Identify and describe the historical Christological understandings that have been operative in and through the Church.

2.4.1 Identify some ways in which Christological formulations influenced modernity and colonization.

2.4.2 Identify some ways Christological affirmations enabled communities to resist the dark side of modernity.

2.5. Understand and identify the intersection between the Christological affirmations of the historical church and the varieties of Christological affirmations that are operative in the student's own community of faith, both locally and denominationally.

2.6. Identify, describe and discuss the resources of local cultures in contributing to a unique appropriation of the heritage of Christological formulations.

3. FORMAT AND CONTENT:

This is a course 11 weekly meetings worth 3.0 credit hours. Work for students consists of classes including lectures, discussions, and students presenting assigned readings; one smaller paper; and a final project.

4. TEXTS:

Athanasius: On the Incarnation translated by Sister Penelope Lawson. Available online at www.romans45.org/history/ath-inc.htm

Karkainen, Veli-Matti, *Christology: A Global Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic) 2003. Available on Amazon.ca

Peelman, Achiel. *Christ is a Native American* (Novalis, 1995). Sections will be available on Moodle.

St. Irenaeus of Lyons: On the Apostolic Preaching translated with an Introduction by John Behr (New York: St Vladimir's seminary press) Vol 17 1997 (You could read an online text as well).

Tanner, Kathryn. *Christ the Key*. (United Kingdom: Cambridge) 2010. Available on Amazon.

5. RESERVES: Text will be available on 2 hour reserve. Articles will be available on moodle.

6. COURSE POLICIES

6.1 Attendance: Students are required to attend all the classes. Failure to do so will have an adverse effect on the grade assigned to class participation. A student who misses more than 20% of the class meetings, regardless of the reasons, receives 0 grade for class participation and automatically works on a B+ maximum for the rest of the course.

6.2 Reading and assignments Students are expected to read all required assignments before class and to complete all assignments as outlined in the syllabus within the specified dates of the course and term.

6.3 Academic honesty Students are expected to adhere to VST's requirements for academic honesty as published in the Student Handbook.

6.4 Inclusive language In speaking and writing, inclusive language is expected when making reference to humans and a variety of metaphors are anticipated when making reference to God.

7. Assignment and Course Evaluation

- 7.1 Course evaluations at VST combine a letter grade system (A+ to B-; course failure is “Not Approved”) including narrative comments based on the competencies of the course. No number grades or weights of assignments are calculated, nor are final grades given numerical equivalents.
- 7.2 Individual assignments within a course are given narrative evaluations, that is, APP (Approved) or INC (Incomplete) with narrative comments, based on the competencies and expectations set for that assignment. One re-write is allowed on any assignment that is INC. The re-written assignment is due two weeks after the work is returned. The final evaluation for an assignment can be APP or NAPP after a re-write.
- 7.3 For a passing grade in the course all assignments must be completed in a satisfactory manner.
- 7.4 See the Essay Evaluation Rubric in Appendix #1

8. Late assignments

Submission of assignments on time is a part of academic, professional and pastoral competence and a part of every course at VST. All assignments in courses are due on the dates specified in the syllabus. Failure to submit an assignment on time will be noted in the narrative evaluation of an assignment. Repeated failure to submit assignments on time may affect the final grade for the course.

9. Limitation on use of social media

Ordinarily, the use of electronic devices in the contexts of classrooms or meetings will be to support the learning, formation, or agenda at hand.

10. VST is committed to creating safe space and an inclusive learning environment. If you have a diagnosed or suspected learning disability, chronic condition, mental health concern, or physical requirement which you anticipate may impact your participation in this class, you are encouraged to discuss your needs with the instructor and the Dean within the first week of classes.

11. CALENDAR

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading Due</u>	<u>Assignment Due</u>
September 13	Introduction	Syllabus	
September 20	Our story	Gospel read in one sitting	
September 27	Our story continued	<i>On the Apostolic Preaching</i>	Personal Christology
October 4	Story of the Ancient Church	<i>Athanasius</i>	
October 11	Story of the Ancient Church	<i>Christology a Global Introduction 1-110</i>	Small paper due
October 18	Contemporary Stories	<i>Christology a Global Introduction 111-179</i>	
November 1	Contemporary Story	<i>Christ is Key 1-206</i>	
November 8	Contemporary Story	<i>Christ is Key 1-301</i>	Project Prospectus Due
November 15	Contextual Stories	<i>Christology 180-290</i>	

November 22	Contextual Stories	<i>Christ is a Native American Part I</i>	
November 29	Transformation?	<i>Christ is a Native American Part II and Conclusion</i>	Major Project Due

12. EXPECTATIONS, ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATIVE CRITERIA

12.1 Class participation: Students are required to read all of the required texts. Each student is expected to actively participate in class discussion. You are encouraged to come prepared to engage in a dialogue about the reading assigned for each class. To facilitate this discussion, a pair of students will be required to make an in class presentation on particular reading for each class. In addition each student not presenting will bring to each class 6 bullet points for the assigned reading. Three of the points will be descriptive of the reading and three of the points will be evaluative. This will be typed and handed in at the end of each class.

12.2 Personal Christology: Pick one of the four gospels in the Christian Canon from a modern translation. In one sitting, read the entire gospel or listen to the gospel in its entirety. Then, develop a 6-10 page theological description of Jesus Christ based primarily upon the gospel you have just read. Spend about 2/3 of the paper on the theological description and about 1/3 of the paper on any observations about the project. What did you learn about your own conception of Jesus Christ? What things were affirmed, what things did you have to rethink? How has your own cultural understanding shaped how you have conceived of Jesus Christ? Etc.

12.3 Small Paper: The student will read and respond to the classic Christian texts, *On the Incarnation* and *On the Apostolic Preaching*. The assignment is to prepare a composite statement of the theology of these works. This paper will begin with a concise, yet, precise identification of the person or party addressed by each work and their significance (if any). Following this identification, the student will outline (in prose form) the flow and heart of arguments of each. The paper will conclude with a short analysis of arguments of the texts and the student's own thoughts on the relevancy and value of this argument for today.

12.4 Major Project: Using the required texts as well as additional resources develop a contextual expression of Christ that fits within Christian orthodoxy (shaped by the gospel story); fits within your particular context (is understandable); and includes a practical element which could lead to transformation within the community.

12.5 Audit students are required to do all the reading and participate in the class discussions and exercises.

12.6 Certificate students are required to do all the reading, participate in the class discussions and exercises, and do the journal, handing in the sections of the journal as listed in the calendar.

13. SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Balthasar, Hans Urs von, 1905. *Does Jesus know us--do we know him?*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press. 1983.

Bauckham, Richard. *Jesus: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: New York, 2011.

- Bauckham, Richard. *Jesus and the God of Israel: God Crucified and Other Studies on the New Testament's Christology of Divine Identity*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2008.
- Bloesch, Donald G. *Jesus Christ : Savior & Lord*. Downers Grove, Ill: InterVarsity Press, 1997.
- Bock, Darrell L. *Who Is Jesus?: Linking the Historical Jesus with the Christ of Faith*. New York: Howard Books, 2012.
- Boff, Leonardo. *Jesus Christ liberator: a critical Christology for our times*. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1978.
- Brown, Raymond E. *An Introduction to New Testament Christology*. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1994.
- Bruce, F. F. (Frederick Fyvie), 1910. *Jesus, Lord & Savior*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press. 1986.
- Dunn, James D. G. *Christology in the Making: A New Testament Inquiry into the Origins of the Doctrine of the Incarnation*. London: SCM Press, 1980.
- Frei, Hans. *The Identity of Jesus Christ*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975.
- Jeremias, Joachim. *Jesus and the Message of the New Testament*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2002
- Jenkins, Philip. *Jesus Wars: How Four Patriarchs, Three Queens, and Two Emperors Decided What Christians Would Believe for the Next 1,500 Years*. New York: HarperOne, 2010.
- Johnson, Elizabeth A., *Consider Jesus: waves of renewal in Christology*. New York, N.Y.: Crossroad, 1994.
- Küng, Hans. *On Being a Christian*. New York: Doubleday, 1976.
- Marshall, I. Howard. *The Origins of New Testament Christology*. London: Inter-Varsity, 1976.
- Noll, Mark A., James D. Bratt, and Max L. Stackhouse. *Adding Cross to Crown : The Political Significance of Christ's Passion*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1996.
- Placher, William C. *Jesus the Savior : The Meaning of Jesus Christ for Christian Faith*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001.
- Stinton, Diane B. *Jesus of Africa : Voices of Contemporary African Christology*. Maryknoll, N.Y: Orbis Books, 2004.
- Witherington III, Ben. *The Christology of Jesus*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990.
- Wright, N. T. *Who Was Jesus?* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992.

Yancey, Philip. *The Jesus I Never Knew*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995.

Appendix #1 Essay Evaluation Rubric

THE SUPERIOR PAPER (A+/A/A-)

Thesis: Easily identifiable, plausible, novel, sophisticated, insightful, crystal clear.

Structure: Evident, understandable, appropriate for thesis. Excellent transitions from point to point. Paragraphs support solid topic sentences.

Use of evidence: Primary source information used to buttress every point with at least one example. Examples support mini-thesis and fit within paragraph. Excellent integration of quoted material into sentences.

Analysis: Author clearly relates evidence to mini-thesis; analysis is fresh and exciting, posing new ways to think of the material.

Logic and argumentation: All ideas in the paper flow logically; the argument is identifiable, reasonable, and sound. Author anticipates and successfully defuses counter-arguments; makes novel connections to outside material (from other parts of the class, or other classes) which illuminate thesis.

Mechanics: Sentence structure, grammar, and diction excellent; correct use of punctuation and citation style; minimal to no spelling errors; absolutely no run-on sentences or comma splices.

THE GOOD PAPER (B+/B/B-)

Thesis: Promising, but may be slightly unclear, or lacking in insight or originality.

Structure: Generally clear and appropriate, though may wander occasionally. May have a few unclear transitions, or a few paragraphs without strong topic sentences.

Use of evidence: Examples used to support most points. Some evidence does not support point, or may appear where inappropriate. Quotes well integrated into sentences.

Analysis: Evidence often related to mini-thesis, though links perhaps not very clear.

Logic and argumentation: Argument of paper is clear, usually flows logically and makes sense. There is some evidence that counter-arguments acknowledged though perhaps not addressed. Occasional insightful connections to outside material made.

Mechanics: Sentence structure, grammar, and diction strong despite occasional lapses; punctuation and citation style often used correctly. Some (minor) spelling errors; may have one run-on sentence, sentence fragment, or comma splice

THE "NEEDS HELP" PAPER (C+/C/C-)

Thesis: May be unclear (contain many vague terms), appear unoriginal, or offer relatively little that is new; provides little around which to structure the paper.

Structure: Generally unclear, often wanders or jumps around. There are few or weak transitions, many paragraphs without topic sentences.

Use of evidence: Examples used to support some points. Points often lack supporting evidence, or evidence used where inappropriate (often because there may be no clear point). Quotes may be poorly integrated into sentences.

Analysis: Quotes appear often without analysis relating them to mini-thesis (or there is a weak mini-thesis to support), or analysis offers nothing beyond the quote.

Logic and argumentation: Logic may often fail, or argument may often be unclear. May not address counter-arguments or make any outside connections. May contain logical contradictions.

Mechanics: Problems in sentence structure, grammar, and diction (usually not major). There are errors in punctuation, citation style, and spelling. May have several run-on sentences or comma splices.

THE "TRULY NEEDY" PAPER (D+/D/D-)

Thesis: Difficult to identify at all, may be bland restatement of obvious point.

Structure: Unclear, often because thesis is weak or non-existent. Transitions confusing and unclear. Few topic sentences.

Use of evidence: Very few or very weak examples. General failure to support statements, or evidence seems to support no statement. Quotes not integrated into sentences; "plopped in" in improper manner.

Analysis: Very little or very weak attempt to relate evidence to argument; may be no identifiable argument, or no evidence to relate it to.

Logic and argumentation: Ideas do not flow at all, usually because there is no argument to support. There is a simplistic view of topic; no effort to grasp possible alternative views. The paper has many logical contradictions, or simply too incoherent to determine.

Mechanics: Big problems in sentence structure, grammar, and diction. Frequent major errors in citation style, punctuation, and spelling. May have many run-on sentences and comma splices.

THE FAILING PAPER (F)

Shows obviously minimal lack of effort or comprehension of the assignment. Very difficult to understand owing to major problems with mechanics, structure, and analysis. Has no identifiable thesis, or utterly incompetent thesis.