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TH601
Christology, Time and Scientific Modernity
Summer School 2026
July 13-17, 2026

COURSE PURPOSE

While human existence in time is determined by the time of Jesus Christ, by the logic of the incarnation, passion, resurrection, and ascension, the predominant accounts of time in the modern West have proceeded from a very different basis. The implications of these approaches are not merely a matter of epistemology or of abstract doctrinal and philosophical claims. Rather, they have had, and continue to have, concrete ramifications for human life together. They have overwhelmingly been death dealing rather than life giving, marked by a series of temporal morals and errors that this course seeks to address. As a counterexample, this course will read Søren Kierkegaard alongside Karl Barth to highlight the ways both figures rejected a Hegelian approach to time that was, and is, not coincidentally intertwined with a radicalized account of history and the co-opting of Christianity by the modern Western state.

COMPETENCE OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course, learners will be able to:

1. Identify the models of time operative in modern Western culture, and describe the role of scientific authority in establishing those models in the popular consciousness.
2. Describe how Christological arguments in the works of Barth and Kierkegaard offer an alternative temporal model.
3. Describe how (1) and (2) might be used in preaching and teaching in congregations.

FORMAT & CONTENT

This 1.5 credit course meets for three hours daily for one week during Summer School. The course is available in-person and online from 0900 to 1200 *Pacific Time*, July 13-17, 2026.

To facilitate the attainment of the above Competence Outcomes, the classroom portion of this course is designed in the proseminar method; active participation is expected. Students are expected to come to class having thoughtfully engaged the “Assigned Reading” for each day. Thoughtfully engaging the daily resources invites critical reading; note taking, highlighting questions, observations, responses, and connections to the reading or resource.

TECHNOLOGY POLICY

The use of Large Language Models (LLMs) such as ChatGPT or Claude, whether for research, summarizing text, or writing, is prohibited. Students are on their honor as current or future ministers of the Gospel to abide by this policy.

SCHEDULE

Date	Pre-Class Activity	Pre-Class Readings	Class Focus
<p>Session 1 <i>Monday</i> July 13</p>	<p>“Read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest” the syllabus and read the first day’s texts. We will hit the ground running.</p>	<p>Required Reading Foreword and Chapter 1, in Slade, <i>The Fullness of Time: Jesus Christ, Science, and Modernity</i>, pp. ix-8. “Jesus, Lord of Time” (§47.1) in Barth, <i>Church Dogmatics III/2</i>, pp. 440-513.</p> <p>Recommended Resources John Taylor, “The Corpus Clock and the Chronophage,” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cCqGtvTA36k “Gadamer on Augustine and Time,” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PznKqYldJdA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductions and expectations • Discussion Focus: What are the stories “in the room” about our lives in time? What is “science” and how does scientific authority work?
<p>Session 2 <i>Tuesday</i> July 14</p>	<p>Bring an example from the Internet or other popular media (popular science books, magazines, etc.) in which a story of origins is used to explain a current political reality, or that takes a contingent reality for granted as natural.</p> <p>Email to Dr. Slade or bring physical copies to share.</p>	<p>Required Reading Chapter 2, <i>The Fullness of Time: Jesus Christ, Science, and Modernity</i>, pp. 9-37. “Given Time” (§47.2) in Barth, <i>Church Dogmatics III/2</i>, pp. 514-555.</p> <p>Recommended Resources “What is Big History?” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aSG5Ao9rS4I</p> <p>Geroge W. Hunter, <i>Civic Biology</i>, pp. 192-196, Tennessee Virtual Archive, https://teva.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/scopes/id/119</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Focus: Beginnings: Stories of origins. How are stories of how the material universe began, and how humans came to be, used and abused?

Date	Pre-Class Practices	Pre-Class Readings	Class Focus
<p>Session 3 Wednesday July 15</p>	<p>Bring a news article or social media post in which the philosophy of the Dark Enlightenment or Neoreaction (NRx) plays a role. Be prepared to discuss the eschatological aspect of the article. What kind of future is portrayed?</p> <p>Email to Dr. Slade or bring physical copies to share.</p>	<p>Required Reading Chapter 3, <i>The Fullness of Time: Jesus Christ, Science, and Modernity</i>, pp. 38-69. Kierkegaard, <i>Philosophical Fragments</i>, 9-36. Michael Graziano, "Why You Should Believe in a Digital Afterlife," https://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2016/07/what-a-digital-afterlife-would-be-like/491105/. Palantir, "The Technological Republic in Brief," handout.</p> <p>Recommended Resources The Interview (New York Times Podcast), "Curtis Yarvin on the End of American Democracy," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NcSil8NeQq8</p>	<p>• Conversational Focus: Endings: How do eschatologies generate current-day politics, and how does theology go wrong in looking for humans to bring about the kingdom of God (or something like it)?</p>
<p>Session 4 Thursday July 16</p>	<p>Find a historical example (image, archival news article) of people being portrayed as somehow "out of time," occupying a different temporality as the developed Anglo West.</p> <p>Email to Dr. Slade or bring physical copies to share.</p>	<p>Required Reading Chapter 4, <i>The Fullness of Time: Jesus Christ, Science, and Modernity</i>, pp. 70-98. Charles Kingsley, "The Natural Theology of the Future," https://www.online-literature.com/charles-kingsley/scientific/7/ "The Love of God" and "The Praise of God" (§18.2 and §18.3) in Barth, <i>Church Dogmatics I/2</i>, pp. 371-417.</p> <p>Recommended Resources "Tangled Roots: Eugenics in Canada, A Short Documentary," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pu1uBIA5Viv</p>	<p>• Conversational Focus: How does "temporal distancing" work to deny some people the theological status of "neighbor," and what does the commandment to love God and neighbor entail?</p>

Date	Pre-Class Practices	Pre-Class Readings	Class Focus
<p>Session</p> <p>5</p> <p>Friday July 17</p>	<p>Optional Pre-Class Reflection</p> <p>Bring your unanswered questions and confusions!</p>	<p>Required Reading</p> <p>Chapters 5 and 6, <i>The Fullness of Time: Jesus Christ, Science, and Modernity</i>, pp. 99-129.</p> <p>Ernst Haeckel, "Ernst Haeckel Gives Germany's Peace Terms," in <i>New York Times</i>, March 19, 1916.</p> <p>Julia Watkin, "Boom! The Earth is Round: On the Impossibility of an Existential System," in <i>International Kierkegaard Commentary v. 12: Concluding Unscientific Postscript</i></p>	<p>• Conversational Focus:</p> <p>Wrapping up</p>

PREREQUISITES

There are NO course prerequisites for participation in this course, but there is reading to complete prior to our first class session. Please come to class having charitably and critically engaged all the required readings for this class. Our daily in-class discussions will be rooted in our reading of these texts. Please, bring your reading notes, questions, observations, and responses each day.

REQUIRED TEXTS & RESOURCES

Slade, Kara. *The Fullness of Time: Jesus Christ, Science, and Modernity*. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2021.

Other texts will be provided as fair-use excerpts online.

EXPECTATIONS, ASSIGNMENTS, & EVALUATIVE CRITERIA

Name of Assignment: Final Paper

Due: August 1, 2026, 11:59PM Pacific Time

Length: 1500 words

Type of Project: Sermon

Description: Incorporating what you have learned in this course, write a sermon on one of the following texts:

Psalm 2:6-8
2 Corinthians 6:1-2
Galatians 4:1-7

You may expand the pericope of the passage to whatever length you prefer, but you should focus on the verses listed.

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