

CT 649
Fall 2015
Instructor: Sarah Lancaster

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I am available to see students by appointment.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

An examination of issues traditionally associated with the doctrine of the person and work of Jesus Christ through study of classic and modern texts, and a critical exploration of contemporary Christological options.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- 1) To explore various images of Jesus Christ in the Bible and Christian history
- 2) To understand Christian doctrine regarding the person and work of Jesus Christ
- 3) To become familiar with some contemporary expressions of Christology
- 4) To prepare a constructive statement of the doctrine of Christ
- 5) To continue to develop critical thinking skills
- 6) To continue to develop writing skills.

TEXTS:

Inbody, Tyron L., *The Many Faces of Christology*

Keck, Leander E., *Who Is Jesus? History in Perfect Tense*

Young, Frances, *The Making of the Creeds*

Norris, Richard A., *The Christological Controversy*

Wiley, Tatha, ed., *Thinking of Christ: Proclamation, Explanation, Meaning*

Green, Joel B and Baker, Mark D., *Recovering the Scandal of the Cross: Atonement in New Testament and Contemporary Context*

Populi Reading:

Bloesch, Donald G., "The Deity of Jesus Christ," in *Essentials of Evangelical Theology*, vol. 1 (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1978), 120-147.

Sarah Heaner Lancaster, "Jesus Christ: Born in Human Likeness," in *Worship Arts*, Winter 2003.

Ogden, Schubert M., "The Point of Christology" in *Journal of Religion* 55: 375-395

Schleiermacher, Friedrich, "On the Meaning of Christmas," in *Christmas Eve: Dialogue on the Incarnation* (Richmond, Va.: John Knox Press, 1967), 69-86

Sobrino, Jon, "Systematic Christology: Jesus Christ, the Absolute Mediator of the Reign of God," in *Mysterium Liberationis: Fundamental Concepts of Liberation Theology* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1993), 440-461

Grant, Jacquelyn, "Womanist Jesus and the Mutual Struggle for Liberation," in *The Recovery of Black Presence: An Interdisciplinary Exploration* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1995), 129-142

Anselm, *Cur Deus Homo*

Dabru Emet

Neusner, Jacob, "There Never Has Been a Judaeo-Christian Dialogue—But There Can Be One"

Haight, Roger, "Pluralist Christology as Orthodox" in *The Myth of Religious Superiority*, 151-161

Hellwig, Monika K., "Christology in the Wider Ecumenism," in *Christian Uniqueness Reconsidered*, 107-116

ASSIGNMENTS:

Each student will be required to do the following:

Write two short papers, four to five pages in length.

Write one paper six to eight pages in length.

Complete all online work. (Some assigned reading listed above is available online, but this reading is to be considered "homework." Online work consists of all other online activities that appear on Populi for each lesson, including but not limited to discussions, tests, and videos. Online work should be completed by Monday of each week for which it is due.)

Prepare for and attend class regularly.

Participate in class discussion.

Turn in your papers electronically. Put your last name as the first word in the title of your file document.

First paper (due September 15): Frances Young argues that there are issues of "truth and identity" that were involved in the formation of the understandings of Jesus Christ represented in the creeds (see page 103). In this paper, first explain what Young understands these issues of truth and identity to be. Second, give your own brief (and tentative) answer to her question, "Should the credal productions at the end of this process be treated as determinative of belief today?"

Second paper (due November 3): Green and Baker make the claim that "no one model of the atonement will fit all sizes and shapes, all needs and contexts where the church is growing and active in mission" (p. 264). In this paper, first explain how the authors' argument supports this claim. Second, state your own view regarding whether it is important for Christian faith to have a single or at least dominant model of the atonement that is shared across times and cultures.

Third paper (due December 8): Write your own constructive understanding of Jesus Christ's person and work. Instructions may be found on the Populi info page under Files. (Note: This paper is not to be about what Jesus has done in your own life. It is instead to be a theological explanation of who Jesus Christ is and what Jesus Christ does that engages the issues we have covered in class.)

GRADING:

First paper: 25%

Second paper: 25%.

Third paper: 35%.

Class participation (including online participation): 15%.

Missing more than 25% of the course may result in a failing grade. Unless an extension has been arranged in advance, late papers will not be accepted.

SCHEDULE:

August 25: Introduction to the course and Images of Christ

Watch Powerpoint posted on Populi before the first class.

Reading: Sarah Heaner Lancaster, "Jesus Christ: Born in Human Likeness," in *Worship Arts*, Winter 2003 (on Populi).

September 1: The Quest for the Historical Jesus

Reading: Inbody, preface and chapter 1; Keck, preface and chapters 1-5 (recommended reading: Wiley, chapter 2, "Jesus of Nazareth in Historical Research" by Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza)

Online work, check Populi.

September 8: The Person of Christ 1

Reading: Young, Introduction and chapters 1-4; Norris, Introduction (pages 1-21) and chapters 2-6

Online work, check Populi.

September 15: The Person of Christ, 2

Reading: Young, chapters 5-6 and concluding reflections; Norris, Introduction (pages 21-31) and chapters 7-9 (recommended reading: Wiley, chapter 3, "Classical Christology," by William P. Loewe)

Online work, check Populi.

First paper due.

September 22: Interpretations of the Doctrine (Evangelical)

Reading: Inbody, chapters 2-3; Bloesch, "The Deity of Jesus Christ" (on Populi)

Online work, check Populi.

September 29: Interpretation of the Doctrine (Liberal and Postliberal)

Reading: Inbody, chapter 4; Schleiermacher, "On the Meaning of Christmas" (on Populi); Ogden, "The Point of Christology" (on Populi); Sobrino, "Systematic Christology: Jesus Christ, the Absolute Mediator of the Reign of God" (on Populi)

Online work, check Populi.

October 6: Interpretation of the Doctrine (Feminist)

Reading: Inbody, chapter 5; Wiley, chapter 7 ("Christology and Patriarchy" by Rosemary Radford Ruether); Grant, "Womanist Jesus and the Mutual Struggle for Liberation" (on Populi)

Online work, check Populi.

October 13: Fall Recess

October 20: The Work of Christ 1

Reading: Inbody, chapter 6; Anselm, *Cur Deus Homo*

October 27: The Work of Christ, 2

Reading: Green and Baker, chapters 1-4

Online work, check Populi.

November 3: The Work of Christ, 3

Reading: Green and Baker, chapters 5-10; Wiley, chapter 4 (“Christ and Redemption,” by Gerard S. Sloyan)

Online work, check Populi.

Second paper due

November 10: Jesus Christ and Judaism

Reading: Inbody, chapter 7; Wiley, chapter 6 (“The Christ Event and the Jewish People,” by John T. Pawlikowski, O.S.M.); “Dabru Emet: A Jewish Statement on Christians and Christianity” (on Populi); Neusner, “There Never Has Been a Judaeo-Christian Dialogue—But There Can Be One” (on Populi)

Online work, check Populi.

November 17: Jesus Christ and Religious Pluralism

Reading: Inbody, chapter 8; Wiley, chapter 5 (“Jesus Christ and Religious Pluralism,” by Roger Haight, S.J.); Haight, “Pluralist Christology as Orthodox”; Hellwig, “Christology in the Wider Ecumenism”

Online work, check Populi.

November 24: Thanksgiving Break

December 1: Jesus Christ and Social Transformation

Reading: Wiley, chapters 8-11 (“A Postcolonial Christ,” by Robert Lassalle-Klein; “Christ in *Mujerista* Theology,” by Ada María Isasi-Díaz, “The Cross of Christ and Discipleship,” by M. Shawn Copeland, and “Christology, Ethics, and Spirituality,” by Lisa Sowle Cahill)

Online work, check Populi.

December 8: Summation Exercise

Online work, check Populi.

Final paper due December 8

Please see Student Handbook for sections providing policy details on the following:

ADA—MTSO seeks to remove barriers to inclusion in its learning communities. Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a documented disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss their specific needs at the beginning of the semester. Please contact the Director of Student Services to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Any accommodation must be agreed upon prior to the due date of the affected course requirement.

Class attendance—Regular attendance is expected in all classes. During unavoidable absences, students are responsible for missed work. An excessive number of absences may result in grade reduction or course failure, despite successful completion of all assigned work. In most cases, a student will not be allowed credit for a course if he or she is absent for 25% of the class sessions. As it relates to blended courses, students may not be allowed credit if they are absent for 25% of class meetings or if 25% of online course work is not completed. Use of Skype or similar technology is not a substitute for attendance in class.

Electronic Devices—Turn mobile devices off or “vibrate only” during class. Browsing the Internet or engaging in email or social network conversations during class is discouraged. Instructors have the right to impose grading penalties for disruptions due to electronic devices.

Human Subjects Research—Research by MTSO faculty, students, or affiliated personnel that collects non-public information from and/or about living individuals or contemporary organizations/groups for purposes of publication or public presentation (including class assignments) must be approved by the Human Subjects Research Committee. MTSO faculty, students, or affiliated personnel should err on the side of caution and apply for committee approval of any activity that may fit this description.

Inclusive Language—In accordance with MTSO’s policy on inclusive language, all students are expected to use gender inclusive or gender neutral language in their writing and in the classroom discussions when referring to human beings.

Incompletes—To receive a course grade of Incomplete, students must submit the petition form from the Registrar with all signatures to the Dean’s Office before the last day of regularly scheduled classes. See Student Handbook for intensive term deadlines. Any petition submitted without a due date for outstanding work will be denied. If work is not complete by the due date the Registrar will record the grade of F for the course.

Pass/Fail—The decision to exercise this option must be made before the end of the second week of the course by completing the appropriate form available through the Registrar. To receive a grade of "pass" the student must do at least the equivalent of C minus work in the course.

Plagiarism—Plagiarism is a serious matter of academic, professional, and personal integrity. All students at the masters level are expected to understand the requirement to provide attribution when the work of others is used. Students are also expected to be familiar with and understand the school’s policy on Academic Misconduct found in the Student Handbook. If students have questions about attribution, citation, and how to avoid plagiarism they should consult the course instructor, the school’s writing instructor, or library staff. When in doubt it is better to provide attribution even if one is uncertain about the proper citation form. Plagiarism is a form of academic misconduct that results in disciplinary actions per the Student Handbook that may range from failing an assignment or course to expulsion.