DO 501 Basic Christian Doctrine

Zaida Maldonado Perez

Follow this and additional works at: http://place.asburyseminary.edu/syllabi

Recommended Citation

This Document is brought to you for free and open access by the eCommons at ePLACE: preserving, learning, and creative exchange. It has been accepted for inclusion in Syllabi by an authorized administrator of ePLACE: preserving, learning, and creative exchange. For more information, please contact thad.horner@asburyseminary.edu.
Contact Information:
Office Hours: T 3:00-6:00 pm or by appointment
(O) 407-482-7647
(You can also reach me by phone, preferably during office hours, or by email.)
Zaida_Perez@asburyseminary.edu

Course Description:
This is an introductory course that bases the theological formation of students upon biblical data as well as upon the classical Christian tradition, contemporary theology, and Wesleyan theological distinctives with a view to helping students grasp the importance of theology for the practice of ministry.

Objectives:*
1. To understand and be able to use the basic vocabulary and concepts of systematic theology;
2. To become acquainted with the range of literature related to the study of systematic theology;
3. To understand the classical tradition of systematic theology;
4. To engage the student in contemporary forms of theology;
5. To highlight the doctrinal emphases of Asbury Theological Seminary;
6. To explore the practical implications of systematic theology for the Christian life

*(These objectives are taken from the core course description and are normative for Wilmore and Orlando campuses)

Required Texts:
Note: The required two texts books as well as other required readings are on RESERVE at the library.


Highly Recommended
**Abbreviations**

We will be reading chapters from the different books specified below and will refer to them using the following abbreviations:

CRT: *Christian Readings in Theology* by Hodgson and King
CTASA: *Christian Theology: A Case Study Approach* by Evans and Parker
ICT: *Introduction to Christian Theology* by González and Maldonado Pérez

See below for bibliographical information

**Notebook of Definitions:** This notebook is for *your* benefit. I will be collecting it once or twice in the semester (random dates) to look at entries. Be smart and make the entries as you go!! You will come across (or have come across) many of these terms in your classes/ministry and it will ease your study if you have a good foundation of meanings now. Include in your notebook any concrete examples that will help you remember/understand the terms.
Course Schedule

Class 1/ September 4

- Introductions
- Review Syllabus
- What is theology: definition and tasks

Class 2/ September 11

- Doctrine, Tradition and Scripture
- Doctrine and Experience
- Doctrine and identity

Reading Assignment:
1. *An Introduction to Christian Theology* (ICT) pp. 9-31
2. *Introduction to Christian Doctrine* (ICD) pp. 183-203

For Reflection Paper:
4. “Authority and Perspective” and “We Call this Book Good,” in *Santa Biblia: The Bible Through Hispanic Eyes* by J. L. González, pp. 11-21, 115-118.
5. “A Dynamic Approach to the Inspiration of Scripture,” in *A Future for Truth*, by H. Knight, pp. 125-137

Class 3/ September 18

- Who is God?
- Doctrine of God/ The Trinity

Reading Assignment:
1. ICT pp. 33-54
2. ICD pp. 1-32

For Reflection Paper:
Class 4/ September 25

- What is the World? Who are we?
- Doctrine of Creation and our Responsibility

Reading Assignment:
1. ICT pp. 55-76
2. ICD pp. 25-32

For Reflection Paper:

Class 5/ October 2

- Who is Jesus Christ?
- Christology

Reading Assignment:
1. ICT pp. 77-95
2. ICD pp. 33-64

For Reflection Paper:
4. “Jesus Christ, His Only Son, Our Lord,” in *CTACSA*, pp. 105-132

Class 6/ October 9

- The work of God in Christ
- Soteriology

Reading Assignment:
1. ICT pp. 83-95
2. ICD pp. 65-95

For Reflection Paper:
3. ICD pp. 96-110
   Note: readings 2-4 below are from *Readings in Christian Theology* (RCT) by Hodgson And King: You will be asked to discuss these in class. Be prepared.
Class 7/ October 16

- Grace and Free Will

Reading Assignment:
1. ICD pp. 204-235

For Reflection Paper:

Class 8/ October 23

- MIDTERM

Class 9/ October 30

- What is the church?
- Ecclesiology

Reading Assignment:
1. ICT pp. 97-118
2. ICD pp. 126-143

For Reflection Paper:
Readings below are from RCT

Class 10/ November 6

- Who is the Holy Spirit?
- Pneumatology

Reading Assignment:
1. ICD pp. 111-125
For Reflection Paper:
Readings below are from *The Holy Spirit* by A. I. C. Heron
2. “First Sketches: The Second and Third Centuries, pp. 63-73
3. “God’s Love, God’s Gift, the Soul of the Church,” pp. 87-98

Class 11/ November 13

- How does the church live?
- The sacraments/Doctrine of Worship

Reading Assignment:
1. ICT pp. 119-137
2. ICD pp. 155-182

For Reflection Paper:

Class 12/ November 20

- The Christian Life/Ministry
- Diakonology

Reading Assignment:
1. ICD pp. 143-154

For Reflection Paper:

Reading Week
November 24-28, 2003

Class 13/ December 4

- What is our hope?
- Eschatology

Reading Assignment:
1. **ICT** pp. 139-158
2. **ICD** pp. 236-270

**Class 14/ December 11**

- Film/Discussion

**Notebook of Definitions:**
- Define “systematic theology”
- Define “doctrine” (stress the difference between both)
- Define “inspiration”
- Define “allegorical”
- What is meant when we say that Scripture and tradition are “coinherent”? (Z: McGrath 246)
- What is meant by “adiaphora” and how does it relate to doctrine? (Z: McGrath 273)
- Atonement (know various forms)
- faith
- *ex opere operato* (re: sacraments)
- transubstantiation
- consubstantiation
- *homoousios*
- *homoiousios*
- hypostatic union
- adoptionism
- docetism
- monophysitism
- kenoticism
- apologetics
- Arianism
- Creed (Christian)
- Patripassionism
- Perichoresis
- modalism
- Deism
- Theodicy
- Eschatology
- Soteriology
- Christology
- Others may be added as we go
Bibliography:
Gonzalez, Justo L. “Authority and Perspective” and “We Call this Book Good.” In Santa Biblia: The Bible Through Hispanic Eyes. Nashville: Abingdon, 1996.
1. **Reflection Papers (20%).**
   Each student is required to complete:
   - 5 Reflection Papers out of the options indicated in the syllabus. **Note:** At least two of the reflections must be on material that will be covered *after* the midterm. These papers will focus on answering the following questions clearly and succinctly:
     - *What is the author(s) saying?* (content)
     - *What does it mean? And, How am I to respond?* (This is the “So what?” of the summary and involves a brief analysis and application.) More on this below.
   - Each paper is limited to no more than two double-spaced typed pages with one inch margins and 12 font
   - Each reflection paper is valued at 4 points each.
   - Reflections will be due *before* the chosen topic is discussed in class. **No exceptions!**

2. **Examination (30%).** There will be one midterm exam covering the material prior to that date. The exam will include vocabulary terms and several essay questions. See the syllabus for the date of the exam.

3. **Final Paper**
   - Credo (20%)
   - Book Review (20%)

4. **Notebook of Definitions:** (10%) As mentioned above, this is your responsibility to keep up. I will be collecting these once or twice without prior notification. This is for your benefit and is part of the task of taking responsibility for your own learning. You should include other terms that you find in your readings or class discussions that will expand your understanding of theological terms. Try using your own words and including examples that will help you understand their use. **Weighting:** 10 points

The FINAL Paper is divided into two parts and is due on the last day of class.

- **Part 1:**
  a. A **one-page** credo. This must be of your own creation.
  b. A **three-page** paper that explains the credo in depth. This should include, for instance, your ordering of the statements (e.g. Why you begin and end where you do?); The choice of specific terms (e.g. how do you refer to “God?”); What is most critical? And, why?; How does this credo relate to your context?; What questions might remain for you?

**Note:** Part 1 of this paper can be done by jotting down your reflections on each Christian doctrine after your readings and class discussions. In other words, work on it *as you go.*
Part 2:

a. A four-page paper (typed and double-spaced) on a particular area of specialization in Christian theology (e.g., Christology, Ecclesiology, Eschatology, etc.). Students will research and read a book(s) on the doctrine of their choice. Note: The paper will be broken down as follows:

First two pages:
1. State the thesis (What is the author’s stated purpose/problem s/he is trying to solve?)
   ▪ place the thesis within the author’s particular context
     (E.g. What are the questions/situations that give rise to the author’s concerns?)
2. Describe how the author argues, discusses the topic (process, method).
   ▪ Where does s/he begin? And, why? How is the argument constructed?
   ▪ How is this important?

Second two-three pages:
3. Analysis
   ▪ of thesis (E.g. what are the underlying assumptions? What questions are left out?
     Address this from your own context/experience/understanding of ministry and in
     conversation with other readings.)
4. Application
   ▪ How does the material impact (E.g. illumine, challenge, critique, guide) some
     aspect of my ministry? What other questions does it raise for me? Be specific.

FORMAT FOR ALL ASSIGNMENTS:
- All papers should be double-spaced, typed, with one-inch margins and 12 font.
- Papers are due on the day assigned and, in most cases, will be used for class discussion
- Quotations should be clearly marked and sources must be noted in end/footnotes
  Note: quotations should be kept to a minimum
- No folders or binders please
- Final papers will be returned to your student box unless you provide a stamped envelope

Important: Assignments will be turned in at the beginning of class and are to be placed in the “Assignment Folder.” Make sure your name, date and assignment topic/title and reflection paper # (e.g. #1, #2, etc. up to 5) are indicated (note: I have had papers turned in with no name). I will only accept papers at this time. Please do not send me assignments via email (unless you have made prior arrangement with me and the situation merits it.)

Participation:
Discussions are an important part of this course. They provide opportunities for further theological reflection and conversation at the communal level and across denominational lines. Students are expected to a) be present at each class and, b) read the assigned material and come prepared to discuss it. Active involvement in class will be taken into account in determining final grades.
Attendance:
More than one unexcused absence will affect the student’s grade and can lead to failing the course. Excused absences refer to unavoidable emergencies that do not include delinquency or attending to church work or other employment.

Grading:
Grading must reflect graduate level work. This implies competency in such areas as*:

♦ focus on the subject at hand
♦ discovery of data
♦ ability to question, analyze, integrate, to reconsider and synthesize
♦ capacity to integrate old and new data
♦ depth and maturity of knowledge
♦ skills to make growth in ministry possible
♦ originality and creativity

(*From FH)

All work is expected on time and as completed as indicated in the assignment. Extensions are not given except for the kind of medical and family emergencies that merit the Dean’s approval. An extension implies lateness without penalty. Note: It is your responsibility to communicate with me if you need an extension before the due date of an assignment. Otherwise, I will have no recourse but to penalize you for your late work. Reflection papers will not be accepted after they have been discussed in class. A late Final Paper will have an automatic grade deduction and will not be accepted after the end of the semester (unless you have applied for an extension). A letter grade will be given based on the grades of work done, with incomplete work counted as “F.”

A (95-) Exceptional work: outstanding or surpassing achievement of course objectives
A- (90-94) Fine work
B+ (87-89) Good, solid work: substantial achievement of course objectives
B (83-86) Good work
B- (80-82) Verging between good and acceptable.
C+ (77-79) Acceptable work: essential achievement of course objectives
C (73-76) Acceptable work; significant gaps
C- (70-72) Serious gaps in achievement of course objectives
D+ (67-69) Marginal work: minimal or inadequate achievement of course objectives
D (63-66) Barely acceptable
F Unacceptable work: failure to achieve course objectives.

Things that might potentially result in a reduction in total score:

Poor or non-engagement with material Poor analysis of material
Presentation of a weak conclusion or argument Misspellings
Lack of, or poor use of dialogue between authors Poor syntax
Answering a different question Lack of inclusive language

Inclusive Language:
Students are urged to use inclusive language wherever possible both in their oral and written work/participation. This guideline is intended to help sensitize the Asbury Theological Seminary community and to provide help in moving beyond our present habits to more just expressions (FH).

Academic Integrity:
The standards of conduct that are articulated in the Asbury Theological Seminary’s Student Handbook concerning academic matters are important to the integrity of our community and the high ethical standards we expect of those who are preparing for Christian ministry. Abuse of these policies will be handled as stipulated in the handbook.

Plagiarism:
Plagiarism is the presenting of another’s ideas or writings as one’s own; this includes both written and oral discourse presentations. Response to plagiarism may include requiring an assignment to be redone, automatic failure of a course or, in some extreme cases, recommended dismissal from the Seminary (FH). Please make sure any borrowed material is properly documented.
To study doctrine is to learn essential theological truths for the purpose of embracing them in our lives and live out the Christian faith with consistency. Basic Christian Doctrine.

Good Solid Biblical Doctrine is Essential for a Healthy Church! A church that does not want to teach theology, or is scared that it is boring, is a church that does not want to know and grow in Christ.

How does Wayne Grudem define Doctrine? "Doctrine is what the whole Bible teaches us on some particular topic." Evagrius the Desert Father said what? "If you are a theologian, you truly pray. If you truly pray, you are a theologian." We should allow _ to shape us instead of the other way around. We should be humble in relating.