

Christology & Trinity in the Early Church

Garrett-Evangelical Seminary HIST 803

Course Syllabus: Spring 2020

Tuesdays 2:30 – 5:30 pm

The Doctor:

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Course Description

This course will focus on the development of the doctrine of the Trinity and the christological controversies, from the earliest decades of the Church through the Third Council of Constantinople (681 CE). Special emphasis will be given to the pre-Nicene period, the Arian controversy, and the Council of Nicaea, as well as the formulation of the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, and the Chalcedonian Definition – the point being to drill down and go deeper into the primary sources than we did in the intro course. Readings will be in the primary sources, especially Tertullian, Novatian, Athanasius, the Cappadocians, and Cyril of Alexandria. We will also explore expressions of Christology in contemporary culture, and some implications of historical theology for contemporary christology. **NOTE:** Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary is committed to providing equal access to its programs of graduate professional education for all qualified students, including those with documented disabilities. The Seminary aims to provide reasonable accommodation for qualified individuals with a disability (based on clinical documentation) to ensure their access and participation in Seminary programs. For details, see “Disabilities Policies and Procedures” in the Student Handbook, or consult the Dean of Students.

Course Requirements:

Each class meeting will consist of lectures, student presentations, group discussion, and other educational media, possibly including films. Questions and discussion during the lecture are encouraged. **Reading assignments listed under each week are to be done AFTER the lectures. Whenever possible, read the secondary sources first, before the primary sources.** There is no assignment before the first meeting of class, unless the student wants to get a head start. Late assignments will not be accepted, unless previous arrangements are made with the instructor. All assignments must be completed to receive a passing grade for the course. The internet, and especially search engines, should NOT be used as primary research tools. **It is a requirement of the course that students are able to use e-mail, receive e-mails (with attachments) from the professor, and turn in papers via e-mail.**

NB: All work for this course must conform to accepted standards of academic ethics, including, but not limited to, the understanding that cheating and plagiarism are unacceptable (cf. Jeremiah 23:30!), and may result in failure of the course (see the relevant sections of the Academic Handbook for further information). **Even the reuse of your own work from outside the course, if used without citation, constitutes a form of plagiarism/cheating.**

Papers: There will be two written assignments for this course. The first will be a research paper, on any topic of the student’s choosing related to the development of doctrine in the early Church. The second will be a shorter paper, in which the student will use the methodology in the book *From Star Wars to Superman* as a springboard to analyze a hero story for its christology. Papers must be created in Microsoft Word, as they will be turned in via e-mail. The paper must include a header with the student’s name, the instructor’s name (spelled correctly) and the date (you should always date your papers – they reflect your thoughts at a certain point in your journey), as well as page numbers. All papers for this course should conform in style to a standard scholarly format. If in doubt, consult A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations by Kate Turabian, or The Chicago Manual of Style. Create a file name for your paper that has the following format: Your last name, first initial, the paper number (1 or 2), an S (for Spring) and the two digit year (for the year). So for example if Korben Dallas was turning in his second paper, the file name would be: **Dallask2S20.doc**.

Research Paper: The research paper will focus on any aspect of Christology that interests you, within the time period of this course, and subject to approval by the professor. It is expected that the research paper will be about 10 pages in length for master’s level students, and 15 - 20 pages for doctoral students. **Research papers MUST use and engage primary sources – not secondary sources only.** The research paper will count for 60% of the course grade.

Final Paper: The final paper will focus on analyzing a hero story, as well as synthesizing the entire course content, and should demonstrate that the student understands the big picture. It should be about 5 -7 pages in length for master's students and about 10 pages for doctoral students. The final paper will count for 30% of the course grade.

Class Presentations: The class will be conducted in seminar style, so it is assumed that all students will attend all class meetings, keep up with the readings, and participate in discussion. All students will present the results of their research to the class. The remaining 10% of the course grade will be based on class participation, especially seminar-style student presentations of the results of their research papers to their colleagues.

Required Reading:

Works on the Holy Spirit, by Athanasius and Didymus the Blind
(St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, ISBN: 978-0881413793) - \$22.00 on Amazon

Nicaea and its Legacy, Lewis Ayres
(Oxford, ISBN: 978-0198755050) - \$59.09 on Amazon

Exploring Kenotic Christology: The Self-Emptying of God, ed. C. Stephen Evans
(Regent, ISBN: 978-1573834445) - \$22.69 on Amazon

On the Cosmic Mystery of Jesus Christ, by Maximus the Confessor
(St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, ISBN: 978-0881412499) - \$16.00 on Amazon

Saint Cyril of Alexandria and the Christological Controversy, by John McGuckin
(St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, ISBN: 978-0881418637) - \$38.00 on Amazon

The Earliest Christologies: Five Images of Christ in the Post-Apostolic Age, by James Papandrea
(IVP Academic, ISBN: 978-0830851270) - \$12.91 on Amazon

From Star Wars to Superman: Christ Figures in Science Fiction and Superhero Films, by James Papandrea
(Sophia Institute Press, ISBN: 978-1622823888) - \$12.65 on Amazon

Novatian of Rome and the Culmination of Pre-Nicene Orthodoxy, by James Papandrea
(Pickwick, ISBN: 978-1606087800) - \$25.00 on Amazon

Trinity 101, by James Papandrea
(Liguori, ISBN: 978-0764820823) - \$11.99 on Amazon

From Nicaea to Chalcedon, by Frances Young
(Baker Academic, ISBN: 978-0801039157) - \$38.41 on Amazon

The professor reserves the right to add to or change the reading assignments, and to add reserve reading assignments during the course of the class.

Suggestions for Additional Reading for Ph.D. Students (to be Negotiated with Professor):

The Priority of Christ, by Robert Barron

Partakers of the Divine Nature, ed. by Christensen & Wittung

God Without Parts: Divine Simplicity and the Metaphysics of God's Absoluteness, by James Dolezal

The Suffering of the Impassible God, by Paul Gavrilyuk

Christ in Christian Tradition, Vol. 1: From the Apostolic Age to Chalcedon (451), by Aloys Grillmeier

The Trinitarian Theology of Basil of Caesarea, by Stephen Hildebrand

Lord Jesus Christ: Devotion to Jesus in Earliest Christianity, by Larry Hurtado

One God, One Lord, Larry Hurtado

Atonement: A Guide for the Perplexed, by Adam J. Johnson

Infinity Dwindled to Infancy: A Catholic and Evangelical Christology, by Edward T. Oakes

Tertullian: First Theologian of the West, by Eric Osborn

Commentary on the Apostles' Creed, by Rufinus of Aquileia

The Filioque, by A. Edward Siesiński

Athanasius: A Theological Introduction, by Thomas Weinandy

Does God Change?, by Thomas Weinandy

Does God Suffer?, by Thomas Weinandy

Arius: Heresy and Tradition, by Rowan Williams

The Gospel According to Heretics, by David E. Wilhite

Course Schedule and Reading Assignments

Week 1 – Feb 4

Topics: Introduction – Christology in the First Century (the New Testament)

Primary Sources: New Testament letters to the Colossians and Philippians
Read Scriptures mentioned in *Trinity 101* chapter 1 in context

Secondary Sources: Papandrea, *Trinity 101*, Introduction and Chapter 1
Papandrea, *Star Wars...*, Introduction and Chapter 2 (Interview)

Week 2 – Feb 11

Topics: The Second Century and the Apologists – Logos Christology

Primary Sources: Theophilus of Antioch, *To Autolycus*
Clement of Alexandria, *Exhortation to the Greeks*

Secondary Sources: Papandrea, *Novatian of Rome*, pp. ix-15
Papandrea, *The Earliest Christologies*, pp. 11-22
Papandrea, *Star Wars...*, Chapter 3 (Star Wars)

Week 3 – Feb 18

Topics: From Apology to Theology – Logos Christology
Tertullian vs. Modalism

Primary Sources: Irenaeus, *Demonstration of the Apostolic Preaching*
Tertullian, *Against Praxeas*

Secondary Sources: Papandrea, *Novatian of Rome*, pp. 15-46
Papandrea, *The Earliest Christologies*, pp. 45-84
Papandrea, *Star Wars...*, Chapter 4 (I, Robot)

Week 4 – Feb 25 [RESEARCH PAPER TOPIC APPROVALS]

Topics: Hippolytus and Novatian – From Logos to Kenosis Christology

Primary Sources: Hippolytus, *Refutation of All Heresies* (excerpts)
Hippolytus, *Against Noetus*
Novatian, *On the Trinity*

Secondary Sources: Papandrea, *Novatian of Rome*, Chapters 2-4 (the rest of the book)
Papandrea, *Trinity 101*, Chapter 2
Papandrea, *The Earliest Christologies*, pp. 85-104
Papandrea, *Star Wars...*, Chapter 5 (The Fifth Element)

Week 5 – Mar 3

Topics: Arianism and the Council of Nicaea 325

Primary Sources: Alexander of Alexandria, *Letter to Alexander of Byzantium*
Arius, *Selected Writings*
Athanasius, *Defense of the Nicene Council*
Athanasius, *On the Incarnation of the Word*

Secondary Sources: Ayres, Chapters 1-4
Papandrea, *Trinity 101*, chapter 3
Papandrea, *The Earliest Christologies*, pp. 23-43
Papandrea, *Star Wars...*, Chapter 1 (Star Trek)

Week 6 – Mar 10

Topics: The Aftermath of Nicaea

Primary Sources: Athanasius & Didymus – *Works on the Holy Spirit* (whole book)
Athanasius, *Letters to Epictetus, Adelphus, and Maximus*

Secondary Sources: Ayres, Chapters 5-7
Papandrea, *The Earliest Christologies*, pp. 105-127, plus chart
Papandrea, *Star Wars...*, Chapter 8 (Pleasantville)

Week 7 – Mar 17

Topics: The Cappadocians, the Holy Spirit, and the Council of Constantinople 381

Primary Sources: Basil of Caesarea, *On the Holy Spirit*
Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Holy Trinity*
Gregory of Nazianzus, *Letters to Nectarius and Cledonius*

Secondary Sources: Ayres, Chapters 8-10, 14
Papandrea, *Star Wars...*, Chapter 9 (The Matrix)

NO CLASS Mar 24 – SPRING BREAK

IF you watched the TV show "LOST," read Chapter 6 of *Star Wars...*
IF you have seen the movie, *Tron*, read Chapter 7 of *Star Wars...*

Week 8 – Mar 31 – RESEARCH PAPERS DUE

Topics: Augustine and the West

Primary Sources: Augustine, *On the Trinity*

Secondary Sources: Ayres, Chapter 15 & Epilogue
Papandrea, *Novatian of Rome*, pp. 143-155
Papandrea, *Trinity 101*, chapters 4-5
Papandrea, *Star Wars...*, Chapter 10 (The Terminator)

Week 9 – Apr 7

Topics: Cyril of Alexandria and the Council of Ephesus 431
Paper Presentations

Primary Sources: Nestorius of Constantinople, *Homily Against the Theotokos*
Cyril of Alexandria, *Second Letter to Nestorius* (included in McGuckin)
Nestorius of Constantinople, *Reply to Cyril's Second Letter* (in McGuckin)
Cyril of Alexandria, *Third Letter to Nestorius* (in McGuckin)

Secondary Sources: McGuckin, *Saint Cyril of Alexandria* (entire book over 2 weeks)
Papandrea, *Star Wars...*, Chapter 13 (Doctor Who)

Week 10 – Apr 14

Topics: Paper presentations

Primary Sources: Cyril of Alexandria, *On the Unity of Christ*
Leo of Rome, *The Tome*

Secondary Sources: Finish McGuckin
Papandrea, *Star Wars...*, Chapter 14 (DC and Marvel)

Week 11 – Apr 21

Topics: The Councils of Chalcedon 451 and Constantinople II 553
Paper presentations

Primary Sources: Canons of the Council of Chalcedon and the Chalcedonian Definition

Secondary Sources: Young (whole book)
Papandrea, *Star Wars...*, Chapter 11 (Planet of the Apes)

Week 12 – Apr 28

Topics: Maximus the Confessor (580-662), Theosis, and Kenosis
Paper Presentations

Primary Sources: Maximus the Confessor, *On the Cosmic Mystery of Jesus Christ*

Secondary Sources: Evans (whole book)
Papandrea, *Star Wars...*, Chapter 12 (Time Machine) and Chapter 15

Week 13 – May 5

Topics: Issues in Contemporary Christology
Paper Presentations

FINAL PAPER DUE May 12th (but there is no actual class meeting May 12th)