

Wesley Theological Seminary  
Course of Study School  
Winter Weekend Session  
March, 11-12 & April, 22-23, 2016

CS-222: Theological Heritage 2: The Early Church

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**Objective:**

This course focuses on the history and theology of the Church through the first five centuries. Using primary sources, students will reflect on significant individuals, events, and the articulation of the Christian faith during this period.

**Goals:**

1. Understand and articulate the doctrine of the Trinity, and the historical debates in the early Church around the person and nature of Christ.
2. Understand and articulate a doctrine of salvation in light of the controversies of the early church.
3. Understand the history and significance of the creeds and ecumenical councils.
4. Appropriate historical theology for pastoral ministry.

**Textbooks:** To obtain textbooks or view the list go to **My Wesley** on the website (<https://www.wesleyseminary.edu/MyWesley>) and click on the button that says "Textbooks" From there select your program (Course of Study Summer Intensive), then select your course number. You may order books on-line directly from our e-store. You may also order your books from Cokesbury or any other bookseller or borrow from friends.

**Required Texts:**

Gonzalez, Justo. *The Story of Christianity, Vol.1.*(Main Text)

Coakley & Sterk. *Readings in World Christian History, Vol. 1.*(Reader)

Bondi, Roberta. *To Love as God Loves: Conversations with the Early Church*

Bettenson, Henry& Chris Maunder.. *Documents of the Christian Church. 4<sup>th</sup>*

\*Note: the germane sections are Part I and Part II (Sections I-VII).

**Instructions:**

Type papers using 12 point font, and 1" margins. Be sure that you have completed all essays before turning in the paper. Do not turn in your essays separately – make them into one document to post to Blackboard and make sure it is complete. You are allowed

one attempt to post each assignment.

## **Written Assignment:**

### **I. Before First Campus Session**

#### **Part One: (10% of total grade)**

Write a reflection based on Roberta Bondi's book, *To Love as God Loves*. Pick one of the defining categories she lists ("Love", "Humility", "Compassion", "Prayer", "God"), and discuss in 2-3 pages **why** it is a defining category for the theology of the early Church, and whether / how it continues to be important in the modern context.

#### **Part Two: (30% of total grade)**

From the following lists, choose two persons (list 1), two events or places (list 2), and two movements or heresies (list 3) on which to write a 2-3 page essay. Your essay should indicate the following:

- (A) When (and if appropriate, where) was this person, event, or movement?
- (B) What was its significance at the time?
- (C) What is its significance in the wider scope of the history of Christianity, and why does it matter (if it matters) for the Church today?
- (D) Name at least two significant documents that deal with the event or movement (or, in the case of a person, that s/he wrote or in which s/he is a significant reference) ?

#### **List One: People**

Alopen\*  
Ambrose of Milan  
Anselm of Canterbury  
Antony\*  
Athanasius of Alexandria  
Augustine of Hippo  
Basil of Caesarea  
Bede the Venerable\*

Constantine I (the Great)  
Cyprian  
Gregory of Nyssa  
Ignatius of Antioch  
Jerome  
John Chrysostom  
Julian of Norwich\*  
Justinian  
Monica\*  
Origen  
Pachomius\*  
Perpetua & Felicitas\*  
Pliny the Younger  
Polycarp  
Tertullian  
Theodora (Empress)\*  
Theodore of Mopsuestia  
Theodore the Studite  
Thomas Aquinas  
Valens\*

\*Note: You need mention only ONE document for this person.

List Two: Events / Places

Battle of Manzikert  
Battle of Tours (Poitiers)  
Council of Chalcedon  
(First) Council of Nicea  
Crowning of Charlemagne  
Egeria's Travels  
Fall of Western Roman Empire  
Great Schism  
Haghia Sophia  
Nicomedia

List Three: Movements / Heresies

Apollinarianism  
Apophatic theology  
Crusades  
Docetism  
Donatism

Gnosticism  
Iconoclasm  
Manicheanism  
Monasticism  
Nestorianism  
Pelagianism  
Pillar saints (Stylites)  
Scholasticism  
Trilingualism

## II. Between On-campus Sessions

ANSWER IN ESSAY FORM (A) and (B), approximately 5 pages each

### A. Choose One (30% of total grade)

1. Much of early Christian theological development is taken up with christology: the doctrine concerning the Person and nature(s) of Christ. Trace an overview of christological discussions from the early days through the Council of Chalcedon, commenting on significant movements, heresies, councils and persons.
2. What was the significance of the iconoclastic controversy? Besides the obvious reference to figural art, what was this controversy really about, and how did it touch on Christian understandings of the nature of God incarnate?
3. Discuss the development of the understanding of the Eucharist. At a minimum, refer to: the *Didache*, Irenaeus, Radbertus & Ratramnus, and Thomas Aquinas.
4. While Christianity is today thought of as a “Western” religion, in the early days it was much more “Eastern” in its orientation and outreach. Discuss some of the early missionary efforts, with particular focus on Asia, Africa, and Britain.
5. Write about the rise of Islam and its implications for Christianity. Be sure to touch on the Crusades, iconoclasm, the Inquisition / Reconquista, and North Africa.

### B. Mandatory Question (20% of total grade)

Pick a topic that interests you, and develop a good, trenchant question to which you would like to have the answer. Research the question and develop an answer as an essay. Be sure to state why you think the question is important. You will be evaluated on how good the question is (33%) and the quality of the response (67%). The question and answer must lie principally in the period between AD 50 and AD 1517.

**FINAL NOTE: Class participation makes up 10% of the total grade. The grade breakdown is therefore as follows:**

<b>Pre-Class Assignment:</b>	<b>40%</b>
<b>Between Sessions Assignment:</b>	<b>50%</b>
<b>Attendance / Participation:</b>	<b>10%</b>

### **Inclusive Language**

In both oral and written contributions to the course, students are expected to be conscious of the power of language in theology. Inclusive language respects both gender and racial diversity, and students should demonstrate awareness that language about persons and God expresses values and impacts theological ideas in the details of race and gender connotations. Both gender and race are socially-constructed categories, and changing language is part of bringing justice to theological discourse.

### **Academic Policies**

**Attendance:** Students are expected to attend all classes in their entirety. Faculty members have the authority to set attendance policies for particular courses and those policies will be included in the course syllabus. Deviation from the attendance policy may result in reduction of grade or loss of credit for the course.

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is regarded as a serious offense and will result in substantial penalties, including the possibility of academic dismissal. The faculty regards the following as forms of plagiarism or dishonesty:

- Copying from another student's paper
- Giving or receiving unauthorized assistance to or from another student during an Examination
- Using unauthorized material during an examination
- Borrowing or presenting as one's own (i.e. without proper attribution) the composition or ideas of another.