

Wesley Theological Seminary
Course of Study School
Summer Intensive Term 1 | July 11- July 21, 2016

CS-222: Theological Heritage 2: The Early Church
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Please read this study guide *carefully*. We have split the previous pre-course work up into two parts. **Everyone will have one assignment due by June 1 submitted via Blackboard and one assignment due the first day of class, also submitted via Blackboard.**

Please schedule time each week to work on your pre-course work. If you are able to do this you will have the opportunity to come to DC next summer and enjoy some Sabbath time with us. Please let Sara Sheppard or Doug Powe know if we can help you with this in any way.

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*. 4th

*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:

Part One: (10%): Parts one and two are due June 1 posted to Blackboard. Please turn these in as one document.

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 2-5 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 (20%) :

Select two of the figures from the list below and using the textbooks as resources, develop a short (two-page) discussion on each, briefly depicting their life and focusing on their contribution to the development of theology and the life (history) of the church:

Ignatius of Antioch
Irenaeus of Lyons
Origen
The Cappadocian Fathers
Constantine
Monica
Augustine of Hippo
Benedict of Nursia
Anselm of Canterbury
Julian of Norwich
Thomas Aquinas

Part Three: (70%): due the first day of class posted to Blackboard

Of the topics listed below, select **four** and develop a four-page paper for each using information from each of the two required texts to support, illustrate, and highlight the historical and contextual narrative you develop.

For each topic discuss the following:

- a. What is the historical background of the issue?
- b. What is at stake in the issue?
- c. Who were the key players and what position did each hold?
- d. What implications does the movement, issue, or controversy have for the faith of the Church and Christians today?
- e. What is your personal interpretation or reaction to the issue? (This should be included, but it should be *last*, after the factual issues and implications are dealt with.)

Topics:

1. Persecution and Martyrdom in the Roman Empire
1. The Apologists
2. The Imperial Church of Constantine and Successors
3. Development of the Canon
4. The Seven Ecumenical Councils
5. Monastic Movement: Its Development and Varieties
6. Great Missionary Efforts
7. Development of Christian Worship
8. The Inquisition and Reconquista
9. Icon veneration and Iconoclasm
10. Understanding of the Sacraments
11. Scholasticism
13. Heretical movements regarding the Person and nature of the Son of God: Arianism, Apollinarianism, and Nestorianism.

Grading:

The instructor assumes that everyone in the class is capable of the work required to receive a “B” grade for each assignment. The following interpretations of the meaning of each grade have been developed to help class members review their work to identify strengths and problems.

A “B” means that the basic elements of the assignment have been faithfully included, the argument is internally coherent, and clearly articulated.

A “B+” means the assignment is also well crafted.

An “A-“ means that the assignment is not only well crafted, but it also probes the issues with considerable insight.

An “A” means the assignment is well crafted, reveals considerable insight, and moves beyond the range of the student’s prior knowledge to begin to construct new perspectives and meanings for the subject. In other words, it shows the student’s imagination at work; it has a creative edge.

A “C+” means that the assignment lacks clarity or focus, tends to reveal more the writer’s opinions than the results of the writer’s analysis, and lacks reflective insight into the issues being discussed.

A “C” means that the assignment does not move beyond the reporting of information from readings and/or class discussions to engaging them with issues being discussed; it may indicate inappropriate or misuse of data and readings.

A “C-“ means that despite some moments of focused discussion and insight, major gaps exist in the development of the argument or discussion.

A “D” means the individual needs to see me.

An “F” means the individual needs to see me immediately.

Grades will be reduced a step (e.g. from B to a B-) for assignments handed in after the start of class, and a full letter grade for any assignments 24 hours past due.

Assignments over 48 hours past due will be lowered two letter grades. We need to talk if an assignment is over 72 hours past due. Please note only two unexcused absences are allowed before grade is lowered one step.

Final course grades are mailed to the student, GBHEM in Nashville and the student’s conference representative by September 30. Grades are not posted on-line.

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.