THEO 303 (05)—THEOLOGY AND THE CHRISTIAN LIFE  
Azusa Pacific University, Haggard School of Theology, Undergraduate Department of Religion and Philosophy  
Fall 2009, 5:55 p.m. - 7:20 p.m., 3 units

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course provides an introduction to the doctrines of the Christian church, focusing on the Christian life and its relationship to theology. The course approaches theology from an inductive method in the Wesleyan tradition, helping the student learn to think theologically from the Scriptures, orthodox ecumenical tradition, experience, and reason. Meets general studies core doctrine requirement for God’s Word and the Christian Response. Prerequisite(s): three units of biblical studies and CMIN 108, or instructor’s permission.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- Gain a clear understanding of the historical beliefs and practices of the Christian faith.

- Be able to differentiate Christian beliefs and practices from those of the culture(s) in which they are situated.

- Begin to think critically about the effect one’s own social and cultural setting has upon Christian thinking and practical Christian living.

- Gain an awareness of various traditions within the Christian community. Seek to be enriched by the knowledge of the traditions of others.

- Learn to apply Christian beliefs to Christian living in a consistent manner.

COURSE TEXTS:

Stanley Grenz. *Theology for the Community of God*. Eerdmans (SG)  
E-Docs as noted below.

RECOMMENDED COURSE TEXTS:

Elizabeth Elliot. *In the Shadow of the Almighty*. Harper & Row.
COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. **Attend** class regularly and **participate**. Please see “Course Policies.”

2. **Read** assigned portions of the textbooks. You will be asked to verify that you have read all assignments.

3. **Two Written Reading Responses (15%)**: These will be due on the dates given below on the course schedule. See instructions below.

4. **One Research Project (20%)**: This project involves researching the way one theologian deals with one theological question. As such, the research project involves three separate assignments (each due on the dates given below on the course schedule), each of which represent steps in the research process:
   
   a. **The paper topic**: Survey the topics and questions covered in the required books to get an idea of what topic you might want to pursue, keeping in mind that your topic can be changed later if necessary. If possible, tell me not only the topic or question you would like to pursue, but also a theologian you would like to investigate who deals with that topic or question (you will eventually need to choose one theologian anyway, telling me early will give you quicker feedback).
   
   b. **A one-page preview of the paper**: This assignment will require (a) a statement of the question to be asked in the paper (see below under the paper itself), (b) your reasons for choosing the topic and the theologian, (c) an outline and (d) a list of at least 5 sources, including at least one primary source (i.e. a source written by the theologian you are writing on). You can use the Bible and required course texts in your paper, but these do not count in your list of 5 or more sources. Further, no more than half of your sources can be websites (unless it is a republication of a book or article). You must provide full bibliographic information for all of the sources (using a standard style, like Turabian, MLA, etc.). The instructor will return these previews with feedback that should help you to write your paper.
   
   c. **The paper itself**: This is an 8-10 page research paper on a selected theologian on a selected topic. The paper should ask a specific question and give it a specific answer (the answer is the paper’s “thesis”). For example, your question could be “What is John Wesley’s view of Christian perfection?” Your answer (the thesis) could be: “According to Wesley, a Christian may reach a state of perfection in which he or she is entirely sanctified or free from conscious sin.” The paper should include the following elements: an introduction, a body, conclusion, citations (either footnotes or parenthetical citations for all non-original material), and a list of sources (can be different than what was given in the preview). In your citations, you should always include the page numbers from the source you are citing, even when you are only paraphrasing someone (note that this is different than APA style). The body of the paper should involve both a clear presentation of what the theologian says about the topic and the student’s own view of the topic. The students “view” should include his/her critical evaluation of what the theologian says, a presentation of his/her personal view on the topic, and an explanation of the significance of the topic. More specifically, the research paper will be graded based on the following criteria (a rubric):
**Format and Style (30%)**

___ (5%) Appropriate length & format (8-10 pp., 12 pt. New Times Roman font)
___ (10%) Consistent, clear citations (a rule of thumb: use at least one citation including specific page numbers per paragraph in the paper; no plagiarism!)
___ (10%) Good organization/structure, with intro., body & conclusion
___ (5%) Paper free of spelling, punctuation, grammatical errors

**Presentation of the Theologian’s Viewpoint (50%)**

___ (20%) Demonstrates accurate understanding of the person’s views (comprehension)
___ (10%) Demonstrates clarity in thinking and writing (clarity)
___ (10%) Demonstrates adequate use of primary and secondary sources
___ (10%) Covers the main elements of the question at hand (comprehensiveness)

**The Student’s Viewpoint (20%)**

___ (10%) Effective critical evaluation of the theologian’s viewpoint (critical thinking)
___ (5%) The student’s own view
___ (5%) Explanation of the significance of the topic and/or viewpoint

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**Notes:**

(1) Students are strongly encouraged to present a rough draft of the paper to the Writing Center before turning it in. If the paper is not free of errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar, the instructor will downgrade the student. (2) The Department of Theology and Philosophy is involved in assessing student learning, and your paper may be chosen for this (by a random selection). If your paper is one of those randomly selected for evaluation, your name will be removed so that the process is completely anonymous and does not affect your grade.

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5. **Three exams.** Exams will focus on the material read, lectured on, and discussed since the previous exam; the final will include a few questions from previous exams. No one is exempt from the final exam, and it must be taken when scheduled by the University. I cannot grant exceptions; those require the written approval of the instructor, department chair, and dean. (The only exception is when you have three finals in one day.)

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Note: The Department of Theology and Philosophy is involved in assessing student learning, and your final paper may be chosen for this. If your paper is one of those randomly selected for evaluation, your name will be removed so that the process is completely anonymous and does not affect your grade.
RELATIVE WEIGHT OF ASSIGNMENTS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage of Final Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Response Papers</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Paper</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<td>Exam One</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam Two</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>30%</td>
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COURSE POLICIES:

Attendance: It is essential that you attend class. Excessive absences will affect your test scores. I reserve the right to penalize your grade if you have excessive unexcused absences. If you are absent you are responsible to find out what you missed and to make up any work affected by your absence. Attendance may be taken randomly.

Class decorum: In the interests of creating an optimum atmosphere for learning and to respect your peers, please observe the following during class sessions:

1. Do not eat food. Drinks are okay.
2. If you have a cell phone, turn it off.
3. Refrain from "coming and going." Please do not get up and leave during the class period unless you’ve let me know you have to leave early.

Late work: You can make up the midterm exam if you missed it because of an excused absence (e.g., life-threatening illness, required university sponsored event); arrangements must be made with me before the exam (by phone if an illness). Class Quizzes cannot be made up. Research papers and creative exercises will be docked one grade increment for each day they are late (e.g. one day late A becomes A-; two days late A becomes B+). Note: All work must be received before 5 p.m. on Friday of finals week.

Cheating and Plagiarism: Cheating is the use of someone else's work which the student ought to have done personally. Plagiarism is the use of ideas and information (not commonly known) from a specific source without giving credit to that source by allusion, footnoting, or bibliography. Cheating or plagiarism will result in an automatic "F" for the assignment or exam affected.

Submitting papers: Written work should be submitted to me in hardcopy. I only accept emailed work if you have made prior arrangements with me and received my permission.

Students with disabilities: Students who have a disability that might prevent them from fully demonstrating their learning should meet with an advisor in the Learning Enrichment Center as soon as possible to initiate disability verification and discuss accommodations that may be necessary to ensure full participation in the class and the successful completion of course requirements. It also helps for me to know at the beginning of the semester of any special needs.
## COURSE OUTLINE AND ASSIGNMENT DATES:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9/10</td>
<td>No Class</td>
<td>SG, Introduction</td>
<td>Introduction to Theology and Life</td>
<td>-E-DOC: Hart</td>
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<td>-E-DOC: McGrath_Preliminaries (Ch. 5)</td>
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<td>-E-DOC: Sanneh “Global Christianity”</td>
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<td>-E-DOC: Packer</td>
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<td>9/15, 17</td>
<td>Chapter 14</td>
<td>Class Handout</td>
<td>Scripture, Tradition, and Inspiration</td>
<td>-E-DOC: McGrath_Sources (Ch. 6)</td>
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<td>-E-DOC: Stackhouse</td>
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<td>-E-DOC: Olson</td>
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<td>9/22, 24</td>
<td>SG, Chapter 1</td>
<td>SG, Chapter 2</td>
<td>God the Father, The Trinity</td>
<td>-E-Doc: Barth_Church Dogmatics</td>
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<td>-E-Doc: Wright (pt. 1 of sermon on Matt 6:33)</td>
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<td>9/29, 10,</td>
<td>SG, Chapter 3</td>
<td>SG, Chapter 4</td>
<td>God, the Creator</td>
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<td>10/6, 8</td>
<td>SG, Chapter 5</td>
<td>SG, Chapter 6</td>
<td>Human Beings and Human Nature</td>
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<td>Exam One</td>
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<td>10/13, 15</td>
<td>SG, Chapter 7</td>
<td>SG, Chapter 9</td>
<td>Sin, Brokenness, Evil</td>
<td>-E-Doc: Fackre_Covenant</td>
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<td>--E-Doc: Plantinga</td>
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<td>10/20, 22</td>
<td>SG, Chapter 10, 11</td>
<td>SG, Chapter 12</td>
<td>Person and Work of Jesus Christ: Son of God and Man</td>
<td>-E-DOC: Berkof (2 online chapters)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>RA1 Due</td>
<td>Research Topic Due</td>
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<td>10/27, 29</td>
<td>SG, Chapter 13</td>
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<td>The Third Person: Holy Spirit</td>
<td>-E-DOC: Fee</td>
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<td>11/3, 5</td>
<td>SG, Chapter 15</td>
<td>SG, Chapter 16</td>
<td>Salvation and Conversion</td>
<td>-E-DOC: Johnson &amp; Webber</td>
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<td>-E-DOC: Witherington</td>
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<td>11/10, 12</td>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>SG, Chapter 17, 18</td>
<td>The Church or Churches</td>
<td>-E-DOC: Barth_Prayer</td>
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<td>Research Paper</td>
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<td>-E-DOC: Bono, Sermon</td>
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<td>Preview Due</td>
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<td>-E-DOC: Foster</td>
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<td>-E-DOC: Sider</td>
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<td>11/17, 19</td>
<td>SG, Chapter 20</td>
<td>RA2 Due</td>
<td>Plurality and Unity</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/24, 26</td>
<td>SG, Chapter 19</td>
<td>VACATION</td>
<td>Sacraments/ Ordinances</td>
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<td>12/1, 3</td>
<td>SG, Chapter 21-22</td>
<td>Research Paper</td>
<td>The Eschaton and the Kingdom</td>
<td>-E-DOC: Dart</td>
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<td>Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/8, 10</td>
<td>SG, Chapter 23-24</td>
<td>Review</td>
<td>First and Last Things</td>
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<td>12/17</td>
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<td>Final Exam 4:45-6:45 p.m.</td>
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Reading Responses Based on Readings

I. General Explanation

- As noted above, you must do two reading assignments (RAs) for a total of 15% of your course grade. RA1 covers selected readings from Stanley Grenz and related material from the first half of the semester, and RA2 covers selected Grenz readings from the second half of the semester.
- For each RA (RA1 and RA2), you will answer questions on reading selections related to one theological question. In each you will choose one theological question from a list of six options, which are listed below (page 9).
- The two RAs are due on the dates given in the course schedule above.
- The purpose of this assignment is to challenge you to understand and thoughtfully interact with important theological primary sources, that is, sources that are written by major theologians from various periods of church history (not summaries written by contemporary writers). I will grade your assignment depending on how well you follow the directions below and on the quality of the work done.
- **Note:** You must do all the required readings listed in the course schedule. This means you need to do all the readings, even if they are not ones that related to your chosen RA assignments.

II. Directions (Please follow carefully!):

1. Choose one theological question out of the questions listed below for RA1 (and later choose one question for RA2).
2. Do all the required readings related to your chosen question below. Readings for RA assignments also appear in bold type in the course schedule above. Where the numbers for the readings vary for the two editions, the decimals for the older 2nd Ed are placed in brackets in the course schedule above.
3. Your paper must take the following format:
   - Type the number of the RA at the top of the paper (RA1 or RA2), along with the question you chose for that RA (see 1 above).
   - Type out both the your question and your answer.
4. After you have read the related material, write three pages expressing the various views about the general theological question that all the readings relate to, namely, the question that you chose and placed at the top of your paper. Then state what you think about it and why, interacting with the readings as you do this. (For example, “I agree with what Augustine said about predestination in the reading selection, because . . .”)
5. The paper should be 5 pages long and should follow the regulations given for all papers above under the “course policies” (double-spaced, 12 pt font, etc.).

III. Theological Questions for Reading Assignments:

(1) For Reading Response 1: RR1 (choose 1)

1. What is the main content and significance of the ancient Christian creeds?
2. What is the proper relationship between Scripture and tradition (with tradition including the work of theologians)?
3. Does God suffer (or change or have compassion)?
4. Is feminine language for God appropriate? If so, what kind?
5. What is the nature of human freedom (and human responsibility)?
6. What is the proper role of history in understanding Jesus Christ? That is, what is the relationship between the Jesus of history and the Christ of faith?

(2) For Reading Response 2: RR2 (choose 1)

1. What are different views of the nature of election or predestination?
2. What is justification?
3. What is the proper Christian perspective on non-Christian (or pre-Christian) religions?
4. What does “catholicity” mean in the context of the doctrine of the church?
5. How is Christ present in communion and what is the meaning of the doctrine of the “real presence” of Christ in communion?
6. What are some different views of final punishment (hell and/or conditional immortality/everlasting death)?

**A List of Required and Recommended Electronic Readings for THEO 303**

**Note:** All links to electronic readings are listed by unit, with readings listed by alphabetical order (by author) within each unit. Any optional/recommended readings are listed with the term **OPT** before them in, with the rest being required ones. For easier reading and review, required readings should probably be printed out.

Hart, Trevor. *Faith Thinking: The Dynamics of Christian Theology.* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1995), 1-8: [http://groups.apu.edu/theophil/theo_303_(z1)_-_theo_&_the_christian_life.htm](http://groups.apu.edu/theophil/theo_303_(z1)_-_theo_&_the_christian_life.htm)


Packer, J.I. *Knowing God* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 11-32: [http://groups.apu.edu/theophil/theo_303_(z1)_-_theo_&_the_christian_life.htm](http://groups.apu.edu/theophil/theo_303_(z1)_-_theo_&_the_christian_life.htm)


Olson, Roger. *The Mosaic of Christian Belief* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002), 11-27, 71-88. [PDF: Olson] [http://groups.apu.edu/theophil/theo_303_(z1)_-_theo_&_the_christian_life.htm](http://groups.apu.edu/theophil/theo_303_(z1)_-_theo_&_the_christian_life.htm)

Stackhouse, John G. Ed. *Evangelical Futures: A Conversation on Theological Method.* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 2000), 39-58 [PDF: Stackhouse] [http://groups.apu.edu/theophil/theo_303_(z1)_-_theo_&_the_christian_life.htm](http://groups.apu.edu/theophil/theo_303_(z1)_-_theo_&_the_christian_life.htm)

Barth, Karl. *Church Dogmatics* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1957), 272-287 [PDF: Barth_ChurchDogmatics] [http://groups.apu.edu/theophil/theo_303_(z1)_-_theo_&_the_christian_life.htm](http://groups.apu.edu/theophil/theo_303_(z1)_-_theo_&_the_christian_life.htm)

**OPT.** Kraybill, Donald B. *The Upside-Down Kingdom.* (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1990), 17-34 [PDF: Kraybill] [http://groups.apu.edu/theophil/theo_303_(z1)_-_theo_&_the_christian_life.htm](http://groups.apu.edu/theophil/theo_303_(z1)_-_theo_&_the_christian_life.htm)


http://groups.apu.edu/theophil/theo_303_(z1)_-_theo_&_the_christian_life.htm


OPTION. National Association of Evangelicals (NAE): “For the Health of the Nations: An Evangelical Call to Civic Responsibility” [PDF]: http://www.nae.net/images/civic_responsibility.pdf (This document was produced by the National Association of Evangelicals in 2004 and was taken from their website.)


Sanneh, Lamin, “Christian Missions and the Western Guilt Complex” http://www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asp?title=143
