

**THE CHRISTIAN TRADITION
[TESP 4]**

**Winter 2008
Monday, Wednesday, Friday 1:00-2:05
238 Bannan Hall**

Prof. Tom Beaudoin

Religious Studies Department, Santa Clara University

*...try out this ancient page for consistency
the script is tight and the twists always work
until you come to the part about learning*

—Martin Finke, “Give Me Writer’s Block” (2001)

Office: Old Mission House, 553 Franklin Street, Room 3

Office Hours: Thursdays 3:45-5:15, plus one “floating hour” each week, depending on students’ needs. Scheduled appointments have priority, but drop-ins are also welcome.

Phone: 408-554-4668

Email: tbeaudoin@scu.edu (please allow several days for response)

For students with disabilities: To request academic accommodations for a disability, students must contact Disability Resources located in The Drahmman Center in 214 Benson, (408) 554-4111; TTY (408) 554-5445. Students must provide documentation of a disability to Disability Resources prior to receiving accommodations.

COURSE READING

Alister E. McGrath, *Christian Theology: An Introduction*, Fourth Edition (Blackwell, 2007)
Alister E. McGrath (ed.), *The Christian Theology Reader*, Third Edition (Blackwell, 2007)

GOALS AND THEMES

The Christian tradition is worthy of study for many reasons: because it is a venerable tradition of faith and intellect; because Santa Clara is a Jesuit, Catholic university whose roots share in this tradition; because many Santa Clara students come from Christian backgrounds and want to think through their personal faith identity; and because of the ambiguous power bound up with Christianity: in Western culture and many other places, Christians and non-Christians have both thrived and suffered under the influence of ideas and forms of experience bound up with the Christian tradition.

But what is “the Christian tradition”? This course will focus on the Christian *theological* tradition, on the diverse ways of thinking Christianly about intellectual questions in the life of faith. By the time the course is complete, students will have had opportunity to appreciate, in some depth, proposed fundamentals of the Christian tradition. These fundamentals include [1] *method*: how Christians think theologically; [2] *history*: the history of the theological tradition; and [3] *concepts*: essential ideas involved in Christian faith. Students will also have opportunity to appreciate something of the *complexity* and *diversity* within Christian theological method, history, and concepts. We will put a premium on patient curiosity regarding, and critical thinking about, this Christian tradition, with a regular attention to clarifying how Christians might live today.

With these foci, this course honors the intentions of first-level courses in religious studies at Santa Clara University, which aim to offer basic categories, concepts, and questions through and with which religion can be studied, and give a basic orientation for further academic study. First-level courses invite “meta”-reflection—asking why we study these topics the way that we do—all the way along.

ASSIGNMENTS AND ASSESSMENT

First Oral Examination (40%)

The first oral examination will test your ability to think comprehensively, creatively, and critically with the studies we undertake for the first half of the course, including the texts and class lectures and discussions. More details will be given in class.

Second Oral Examination (40%)

The second oral examination will test your ability to think comprehensively, creatively, and critically with the studies we undertake for the second half of the course, including the texts and class lectures and discussions. More details will be given in class.

Final Statement of Learning (20%)

Students will write a 2-3 page single-spaced paper about what they have learned this quarter. Specific information about the assignment will be distributed in class.

SOME IMPORTANT NOTES FOR ACCOMPLISHING GOOD WORK TOGETHER

- It is strongly recommended that students form study groups in order to discuss the course content on at least a weekly basis, especially the readings. We have a great deal to study in ten short weeks, and in a course like this, it is almost always easier to stay disciplined when you are supported by a serious group of peers who want to help each other do well.

- Each time that class meets, it will be assumed that every student is prepared to intelligently discuss all of the required reading for that class.

- No laptop computers may be used in class.

- Plagiarism or other violations of academic integrity are forbidden by Santa Clara University in general and this course in particular. Please see your Handbook for details of the Santa Clara policy. The consequence of plagiarism is typically a failing grade for the course.

- Cell phones *must* be turned off before class.
- Please do not bring food or drinks (except water) to class.
- If you must miss class, contact another student to find out what you missed; the professor cannot teach individual make-up lessons or respond to emails about what was missed on a particular day of class.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Monday 7 January

Welcome, Introduction to Course, Discussion of Syllabus

Part I: Method: How Do Christians Think Theologically?

Wednesday 9 January

Doing Christian Theology: Preliminaries

Introduction: 101-120

- Reader:*
- “Justin Martyr on Philosophy and Theology,” 3-4
 - “Tertullian on the Relation of Philosophy and Heresy,” 6-7
 - “Augustine on Philosophy and Theology,” 7-9

Friday 11 January

No class: Prof. Beaudoin away

Monday 14 January

Doing Christian Theology: Sources

Introduction: 121-152

- Reader:*
- “Irenaeus on the Role of Tradition,” 79-80
 - “The Council of Trent on Scripture and Tradition,” 103-104

Wednesday 16 January

Doing Christian Theology: Knowledge of God

Introduction: 153-172

- Reader:*
- “Sir Thomas Browne on the Two Books of Revelation,” 115-117
 - “Karl Barth on Revelation as God’s Self-Disclosure,” 146-148

Friday 18 January
Doing Christian Theology: With Philosophy

Introduction: 173-200

- Reader:*
- "Descartes on the Existence of God," 30-32
 - "Pascal on Proofs for the Existence of God," 32-33

Monday 21 January

No class: Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday

Part II: History: How Has the Christian Tradition Changed Over Time and Place?

Wednesday 23 January
Patristic Theologies

Introduction: 5-21

- Reader:*
- "Origen on the Three Ways of Reading Scripture," 84-85
 - "Cyril of Jerusalem on the Role of Creeds," 85
 - "Gregory of Nyssa on Human Longing for God," 412-413

Friday 25 January
Middle Ages and Renaissance Theologies

Introduction: 22-42

- Reader:*
- "Thomas Aquinas on Divine Omnipotence," 214-215
 - "Bonaventure on the Origin of Evil," 215-216
 - "Julian of Norwich on God as Our Mother," 216-218

Monday 28 January
Reformation Theologies

Introduction: 43-64

- Reader:*
- "Luther's Discovery of the 'Righteousness of God,'" 439-440
 - "Luther on Justifying Faith," 441-442
 - "Luther on Sin and Grace," 442-443
 - "Calvin on Predestination," 446-447
 - "Calvin on Faith and the Promises of God," 447-448
 - "Calvin on the Concept of Justification," 448-449
 - "Council of Trent on Justification," 450

Wednesday 30 January
Modern Theologies

Introduction: 65-98

Reader:

- "Bultmann on Demythologization and Biblical Interpretation," 150-152
- "Bultmann on the Existential Interpretation of Eschatology," 665-667
- "Soelle on Suffering and Redemption," 396-397

Friday 1 February

No class: Religious Studies Department Retreat

Monday 4 February
Exams

Wednesday 6 February
Exams

Friday 8 February
Exams

Part III: Concepts: What are Some Essential Ideas in Christian Faith?

Monday 11 February
The Christian Tradition on God

Introduction: 203-242

Reader:

- "Athenagoras of Athens on the Christian God," 178-179
- "Carr on Feminism and the Maleness of God," 251-253

MAKE-UP CLASS: Tuesday 12 February, Christian Tradition Pizza and Conversation, 6:00-7:30pm

Wednesday 13 February
The Christian Tradition on Trinity

Introduction: 243-271

Reader:

- "Gregory of Nyssa on Human Analogies of the Trinity," 187-190
- "Boff on the Trinity as Good News for the Poor," 234-236

Friday 15 February
The Christian Tradition on Christ

Introduction: 272-304

- Reader:*
- "Chalcedonian Definition of the Christian Faith," 281-283
 - "Radford Ruether on the Maleness of Christ," 328-330

Monday 18 February

No class: Presidents' Day

Wednesday 20 February
Historical Consciousness and Christianity

Introduction: 305-325

- Reader:*
- "Tillich on the Dispensability of the Historical Jesus," 320-322
 - "Pannenberg on the Indispensability of the Historical Jesus," 322-325

Friday 22 February
Salvation

Introduction: 326-359

- Reader:*
- "Anselm of Canterbury on the Atonement," 356-358
 - "Peter Abelard on the Love of Christ in Redemption," 358-359

Monday 25 February
Sin and Grace

Introduction: 360-390

- Reader:*
- "Augustine on Fallen Human Nature," 416-418
 - "Pelagius on Human Responsibility," 419-421

Wednesday 27 February
Church

Introduction: 391-418

- Reader:*
- "Cyril of Jerusalem on the Catholicity of the Church," 494-495
 - "Luther on Priests and Laity," 505-506
 - "Second Vatican Council on the Nature of the Church," 529-532

Friday 29 February

No class: Prof. Beaudoin at Conference

Monday 3 March
Religions

Introduction: 445-463

Reader:

- "Rahner on Christianity and the Non-Christian Religions," 614-617
- "Song on the Cross and the Lotus," 629-633

Wednesday 5 March
Last Things

Introduction: 464-485

Reader:

- "Irenaeus on the Final Restoration of Creation," 645-646
- "Balthasar on Hell," 673-674
- "Tanner on Eternal Life," 680-682

Friday 7 March
Exams**Monday 10 March**
Exams**Wednesday 12 March**
Exams**Friday 14 March**
What Have We Learned?

Final Statement of Learning Due

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