



Daystar Institute of Biblical Theology & Leadership Development

COURSE SYLLABUS

INTRODUCTION TO CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY

June 16, 2009

INTRODUCTION

For the purposes of this course, we define **doing theology** as the act of deriving theological principles from Scripture through proper hermeneutical procedure and skillfully applying those principles to the practical issues of life and ministry in community and in culture. Moreover, we define **theological education** as the pedagogical process by which those who have embraced Jesus Christ as Savior and have placed themselves under his authority as Lord acquire skill in doing theology. The scope and rigor of theological education required by a disciple of Christ is a function of his or her **ministry identity**, defined as the unique profile of talents and endowments that determine the particular set of ministry arenas in which he or she can perform with great power, impact, and fruitfulness. **Theology as habitus** is the desired outcome of theological education whereby the disciple habitually applies theological principles to all aspects of life and ministry, and he or she thereby walks in the way of Christ and the apostles; to wit, the way of wisdom.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In accordance with the above definitions, this course is designed to be the first step in helping the student develop and embrace a Christian worldview; to wit, the ability to represent persons, circumstances, and things in his or her material time-space world in accordance with Scripture as opposed to natural intuition and lived experiences apart from God.

The course consists of four major sections as follows:

1. **In His Image: Toward Building a Christian Worldview**, including discussions of the paradigmatic shift from theology as a noun to theology as a verb, the motivation for the course according to the teaching priorities of the Apostle Paul, and the five principal ways of doing theology.¹
2. **The Twelve Great Debates: A Survey of the History of Christian Theology**, which is a discussion in five parts of the history of Christian theology from the 1st century to the present, which has been shaped by controversy and debate.
3. **Knowing the Fear of the Lord: An Introduction to Representational Theology**, which is a discussion in two parts of the Bible as a representational system and the life-critical importance

¹ In regard to the teaching priorities of the Apostle Paul, refer to *A Pauline Template for Theological Education*, which is accessible and available for download from the Daystar section of www.thefoothills.us.

of adopting biblical representations of persons, circumstances, and things in our material time-space world.

4. ***The Eschaton: The Story of the End of History***, which is a discussion in four parts of the events and circumstances that will attend the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ and their significance to life and ministry in the present.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The learning objectives for this course of study are as follows:

- ◆ To gain an appreciation for theology as a noun – something we practice – rather than a noun – something we merely believe.
- ◆ To gain an appreciation for the significance of the storyline of the Bible as a framework for doing theology.
- ◆ To gain an appreciation for how this course is motivated by the teachings of the Apostle Paul and where it fits in a theological education sequence.
- ◆ To gain an appreciation for strengths and weaknesses of each of the five principal ways of doing theology and to be introduced to the integrative method for doing theology.
- ◆ To gain an appreciation for the way in which controversy and debate has shaped Christian theology from the 1st century to the present, including lessons from the past that are applicable to life and ministry in the present.
- ◆ To gain an appreciation for the Bible as a representational system and to become convinced of the life-critical importance of embracing biblical representations.
- ◆ To understand the biblical representation of the times of the end and their relevance to life and ministry in the present.
- ◆ To gain an appreciation for and the ability to critically analyze and evaluate the principal views on the times of the end.

COURSE RESOURCES

Relevant Scripture and theological readings are prescribed for each of the five parts of the SHARED LEARNING IN COMMUNITY section. The theological readings are prescribed from the following list:

1. *A Pauline Template for Theological Education*, by Peter Briggs.
2. *In His Image: Introduction to Christian Theology*, a lecture and monograph by Peter Briggs.
3. *A Practical Theology of Mentoring*, by Peter Briggs.
4. *The Twelve Great Debates: Apostolic Period*, a lecture by Peter Briggs.
5. *The Twelve Great Debates: Patristic Period*, by David Preston.
6. *The Twelve Great Debates: Medieval & Renaissance Periods*, by David Preston.
7. *The Twelve Great Debates: Reformation & Post-Reformation Periods*, by David Preston.
8. *The Twelve Great Debates: Modern & Postmodern Periods*, by David Preston.
9. *Knowing the Fear of the Lord: An Introduction to Representational Theology – Part One*, a lecture by Peter Briggs.
10. *Knowing the Fear of the Lord: An Introduction to Representational Theology – Part Two*, a lecture by Peter Briggs.
11. *The Eschaton: The Story of the End of History – Part One*, a lecture by Peter Briggs.
12. *The Eschaton: The Story of the End of History – Part Two*, a lecture by Peter Briggs.
13. *The Eschaton: The Story of the End of History – Part Three*, a lecture by Peter Briggs.
14. *Moody Handbook of Theology*, by Paul Enns.
15. *Christian Theology*, by Millard Erickson.
16. *Christian Theology: An Introduction*, by Alister McGrath.
17. *The Christian Theology Reader*, edited by Alister McGrath.

18. *Historical Theology: An Introduction to the History of Christian Thought*, by Alister McGrath.
19. *The Story of Christianity*, by Justo González.
20. *A History of Christian Thought*, Vol. 1 – 3, by Justo González.
21. *The History of Christian Doctrines*, by Louis Berkhoff.
22. *Renewing the Center: Evangelical Theology in a Post-Theological Era*, by Stanley Grenz.
23. *Beyond Foundationalism: Shaping Theology in a Postmodern Context*, by Stanley Grenz & John Franke.
24. *Reclaiming the Center: Confronting Evangelical Accommodation in Postmodern Times*, by Millard Erickson, et al.
25. *Rebirth of Orthodoxy*, by Thomas Oden.
26. *Understanding Dispensationalists*, by Vern Poythress.
27. *Things to Come*, by Dwight Pentacost.
28. *The Last Days According to Jesus*, by R. C. Sproul.
29. *The Blessed Hope*, by George Eldon Ladd.
30. *The Pre-Wrath Rapture of the Church*, by Marvin Rosenthal.
31. *The Final Prophecy of Jesus: An Introduction, Analysis, and Commentary on the Book of Revelation*, by Oral Edmond Collins.

All of the above items are available in the Daystar Institute Library at The Foothills, 12504 Candelaria Road NE, Albuquerque, NM. This syllabus and other materials pertinent to this course of study are available in the [Daystar](#) section of the website www.TheFoothills.us (click on the [Daystar](#) tab near the upper right corner of the home page).

SHARED LEARNING IN COMMUNITY (SLIC)

This section of the course syllabus will be completed by your preparation for and participation in a sequence of seminars in which the learning objectives for the course will be substantially realized through discussion of a number of research questions and issues. The questions and issues to be addressed are organized into a number of parts with a defined learning objective and prescribed Scripture and theological readings for each part. The theological readings are drawn from the list under *Course Resources* above.

If you are intending to take this course for academic credit you shall prepare written responses to each of the questions and issues. Even if you are not intending to take this course for academic credit, you may still choose to write out your responses to the questions and issues. In any case, you should structure your response to a research question or issue according to the following three-part outline:

- ◆ A summative overview of your response which presents a crisp, cogent answer to the question or issue in a short paragraph consisting of no more than three sentences.
- ◆ An expansion of the response revealing analysis of logical complexities, evaluation and synthesis of alternative concepts and viewpoints, and a general mastery of the material assumed by the question or issue.
- ◆ A summative conclusion.

In other words, responses to the research questions and issues, whether written or oral, together with your participation in the SLIC discussion sessions for this course, should reveal not only your mastery of the course subject matter but also your ability to powerfully and convincingly communicate the results of your research.

If you are intending to take this course for academic credit, your written response to each question or issue shall be an essay which is as complete as possible within the scope of the question or issue.

The minimum length for an essay response shall be one page, double-spaced, using a 12-point font and one-inch margins. The maximum length for an essay response shall be two pages, formatted as specified above.

PART 1.1 – THE STORYLINE OF THE BIBLE: A FRAMEWORK FOR DOING THEOLOGY

Learning Objective for Part 1.1

The learning objective of Part 1.1 is to gain an appreciation for the significance of the storyline of the Bible as a framework for doing theology.

Scripture Readings for Part 1.1

Read the following Scripture passages in preparation for responding to the questions and issues for Part 1.1. They are listed according to the order of discussion rather than according to canonical order.

- ◆ 1 Corinthians 10:1-13
- ◆ Genesis 1 & 2; Exodus 3:13-22, 18:10-12 & 20:1-3; and Psalm 19:1-11
- ◆ Ephesians 1:3-10 & 2:1-10
- ◆ Acts 17:22-30 & 14:8-18
- ◆ Romans 3:21-26 and Titus 2:11-14
- ◆ Revelation 5:6-10 & 20:1-6
- ◆ Romans 8:26-30; Philippians 2:12-13; 2 Peter 1:3-11; 1 Corinthians 15:50-57; Colossians 3:5-11; and 1 John 3:1-3

Theological Readings for Part 1.1

Read the following in preparation for responding to the questions and issues for Part 1.1:

2. *In His Image: Introduction to Christian Theology*, by Peter Briggs, pp. viii-13.

Questions and Issues for Part 1.1

The questions and issues for Part 1.1 are as follows:

1. Discuss the linear concept of time introduced in the ancient writings of Moses in relation to other ancient concepts of time. Discuss why the three paradigmatic events labeled **A**, **X**, and **Ω** are determinative with respect to all of life and ministry in the present.
2. Critically analyze and discuss the proposed formulation of the storyline of the Bible. In particular, discuss its strengths, weaknesses, and whatever revisions you would propose and why.
3. Critically analyze and discuss the proposition that the storyline of the Bible rather than some system of doctrine should provide the framework for doing theology.

PART 1.2 – THE NORMATIVENESS OF PAUL’S TEACHING

Learning Objective for Part 1.2

The learning objective of Part 1.2 is to gain an appreciation for how this course is motivated by the teachings of the Apostle Paul and where it fits in a theological education sequence.

Scripture Readings for Part 1.2

Read the following Scripture passages in preparation for responding to the questions and issues for Part 1.2.

- ◆ Romans 15:14-21
- ◆ Ephesians 3:1-13

Read each of these passages in its context to comprehend and assess the normativeness of the teachings of the Apostle Paul.

Theological Readings for Part 1.2

Read the following in preparation for responding to the questions and issues for Part 1.2:

1. *A Pauline Template for Theological Education*, by Peter Briggs.
2. *In His Image: Introduction to Christian Theology*, a lecture by Peter Briggs.

Questions and Issues for Part 1.2

The questions and issues for Part 1.2 are as follows:

1. Based upon your research thus far, discuss the normativeness of the teachings of the Apostle Paul. According to your view, to what extent should his teachings govern theological education in general and church-based theological education in particular? Be prepared to defend your position.
2. Discuss the definitions presented in the introductory section of this syllabus. Compare, contrast, and evaluate the learning objectives for this course with those for other courses in theology with which you are familiar.
3. In accordance with the definitions presented in the introductory section of this syllabus, discuss the answer to the following question: ***who should be competent to do theology?*** What are the attributes and parameters of the support network that is needed in order for this to be possible?
4. Based upon your research thus far, discuss the placement of this course of study in a theological education curriculum. What do you expect to achieve through this course of study?

PART 1.3 – THE FIVE WAYS OF DOING THEOLOGY AND THE PROPOSED INTEGRATIVE METHOD

Learning Objective for Part 1.3

The learning objective of Part 1.3 is to gain an appreciation for strengths and weaknesses of each of the five principal ways of doing theology and to be introduced to the proposed integrative method for doing theology.

Scripture Readings for Part 1.3

Read the following Scripture passages in preparation for responding to the questions and issues for Part 1.3.

- ◆ 2 Timothy 2:14-19 & 3:10-17

Theological Readings for Part 1.3

Read the following in preparation for responding to the questions and issues for Part 1.1:

2. *In His Image: Introduction to Christian Theology*, a lecture by Peter Briggs.
3. *A Practical Theology of Mentoring*, by Peter Briggs, pp. 29-51.

Questions and Issues for Part 1.3

The questions and issues for Part 1.3 are as follows:

1. Discuss each of the five principal ways of doing theology, including the strengths and weaknesses of each.
2. Critically analyze and evaluate the proposed integrative method as a means to derive theological principles from Scripture and apply them to life and ministry.
3. List and discuss the six principal theological systems that may be embraced by segments of the evangelical community. Critically analyze and evaluate each against the standard of Scripture.

PART 2 – THE TWELVE GREAT DEBATES: APPRECIATING THE IMPORTANCE OF TRADITION

Learning Objective for Part 2

The learning objective of Part 2 is to gain an appreciation for the way in which controversy and debate has shaped Christian theology from the 1st century to the present, including lessons from the past that are applicable to life and ministry in the present. The discussion for Part 2 is divided into five parts corresponding to the following historical periods:

- ◆ Apostolic Period, 31 – 100 AD
- ◆ Patristic Period, 100 – 500 AD
- ◆ Medieval & Renaissance Periods, 500 – 1500 AD
- ◆ Reformation & Post-Reformation Periods, 1500 – 1650 AD
- ◆ Modern Period & Postmodern Periods, 1650 AD – present

In our research and discussions under Part 2, we will endeavor to understand and embrace the biblical concept of **tradition** as that which is to be handed down or over from one generation of believers to the next. In order to maintain an unbroken chain, each new generation must embrace, internalize, and practice the Christian tradition handed down to them so as to be able to pass it on to the next generation.

Scripture Readings for Part 2.1 – The Apostolic Period

Read the following Scripture passages in preparation for the discussion under Part 2.1:

- ◆ Colossians 2:1-5
- ◆ 2 Thessalonians 3:6-12
- ◆ 1 Timothy 4:6-10 & 6:1-10
- ◆ 2 Timothy 2:1-7 & 4:1-5
- ◆ Titus 1:5-10 & 2:1-10
- ◆ 2 Peter 1:3-15

Each of the passages listed above represent the life-critical importance of **the tradition** delivered by the apostles to the church of the 1st century AD. In the passage from 2 Thessalonians the Apostle Paul employs the Greek word *paradosis* which is translated ‘tradition’ and signifies the content of that which is handed down or over. In the passage from the 2nd chapter of 2 Timothy that word is not employed, but the dynamics of tradition is addressed whereby one generation faithfully delivers to the next the instruction concerning the way of Christ and the apostles, thereby carefully guarding and preserving the Christian tradition. In each of the other Pauline passages listed above, other terms are employed to represent the content and life-critical importance of the tradition delivered by the apostles to the 1st century church. For example, **sound doctrine** is a favorite Pauline term. In addition to studying each of the above passages in context, locate and study at least two other biblical passages in which the concept of tradition is addressed. **Hint:** A number of the Psalms preserve the tradition of the nation of Israel. In Stephen’s defense before the Sanhedrin, he recounts that tradition.

Theological Readings for Part 2.1 – The Apostolic Period

Read the following in preparation for responding to the questions and issues for Part 2.1:

3. *A Practical Theology of Mentoring*, pp. 11-27, by Peter Briggs.
4. *The Twelve Great Debates: Apostolic Period*, a lecture by Peter Briggs.

Questions and Issues for Part 2.1 – The Apostolic Period

The questions and issues for Part 2.1 are as follows:

1. Based upon your study of the Scripture passages for Part 2, discuss the manner in which the apostles represent the **tradition** which they delivered to the church of the 1st century AD. Identify and discuss each of the textual clues which convey a representation of the importance which the apostles attached to this tradition. Conclude your discussion with a carefully crafted definition of tradition as that which is handed down or over.
2. Discuss the implication of your answer to the first question above to your own study in the sphere of Christian theology.
3. Discuss the concept of the kingdom of God (equivalent to the kingdom of heaven in Matthew’s gospel). In particular, discuss the multi-phased program whereby the kingdom of God is actualized on the earth.

4. Discuss the implications of the ***gospel of the kingdom*** preached by Christ and the apostles. Compare and contrast this understanding of the Christian gospel with what you assess to be the common understanding of the gospel.

Scripture Readings for Part 2.2 – The Patristic Period

- ◆ Matthew 13:1-58
- ◆ Acts 20:17-38
- ◆ 1 Corinthians 5:1-13
- ◆ 1 Timothy 4:1-16
- ◆ 2 Timothy 3:1-17
- ◆ Titus 1:10-16
- ◆ Hebrews 12:12-17
- ◆ 2 Peter 1:16 – 2:22

The Patristic Period was characterized by the leaders of the early church counteracting false teaching and heresy. Each of the passages listed above addresses some aspect of this issue. In the kingdom parables recorded in the 13th chapter of Matthew, Jesus sets forth the fact that the remarkable growth of the kingdom would be accompanied by false teaching. Moreover, false teachers would exist within the community of faith, and they would masquerade as true disciples while at the same time promoting damnable heresies. The teachings of the apostles address the vigilance that must be practiced with respect to false teaching and accompanying immorality and the diligence and rigor with which false teaching must be resisted and rooted out.

Theological Readings for Part 2.2 – The Patristic Period

Read the following in preparation for responding to the questions and issues for Part 2.2:

5. *The Twelve Great Debates: Patristic Period*, by David Preston.

Questions and Issues for Part 2.2 – The Patristic Period

Of the twelve great debates, six occurred during the Patristic Period (ca. 100 – 500 AD). These six are as follows:

- ◆ The Gnostic controversy
- ◆ The Arian controversy
- ◆ The Apollinarian controversy
- ◆ The Nestorian & Eutychian controversy
- ◆ The Donatist controversy
- ◆ The Pelagian controversy

For each of these six controversies you are to address the following questions and issues under Part 2.2:

1. Describe the historical setting in which the issue first surfaced, including the principal characters who argued each side of the issue and the manner in which the issue was initially resolved. Include all relevant historical details such as dates, people, places, and councils.
2. Formulate a cogent, carefully worded statement of the theological issue that was at stake. Assess the impact of the issue on the gospel and its application – that is, the Christian tradition once for all delivered by the apostles to the church of the 1st century. How critical was the issue to the life and ministry of the church?
3. Critically evaluate the handling of the issue by the leaders of the early church. What biblical principles were applied, and were they applied correctly according to your evaluation? Were there non-theological factors (e.g., political, philosophical, or scientific) that impacted the debate, and, if so, how did they influence the outcome?
4. Did the issue resurface at a later time, and, if so, what was the impact on the church, was the issue put to rest once and for all, and, if so, how?
5. Are there contemporary embodiments of the issue in question with which the church is still wrestling? If so, in what form do these contemporary embodiments present themselves?
6. Based upon all your research in regard to the issue in question, what lessons should be derived from the manner in which the issue has been handled down through the history of the church, and what application do these lessons have on the life and ministry of the church in the 21st century.
7. Discuss your sharpened understanding of the biblical concept of tradition as that which is handed down or over as a result of your study of the controversies of the Patristic Period.

Scripture Readings for Part 2.3 – The Medieval & Renaissance Periods

Reread and continue to reflect upon the passages listed under Part 2.2.

Theological Readings for Part 2.3 – The Medieval & Renaissance Periods

Read the following in preparation for responding to the questions and issues for Part 2.3:

6. *The Twelve Great Debates: Medieval & Renaissance Periods*, by David Preston.

Questions and Issues for Part 2.3 – The Medieval & Renaissance Periods

None of the twelve great debates occurred during the Medieval & Renaissance Periods (ca. 500 – 1500 AD). In the questions and issues for Part 2.3 you are asked to summarize and reflect upon the major developments that occurred during this segment of church history.

1. Formulate a list of the significant developments of this period, whether theological, scientific, or political. For each one formulate a cogent description of the development.
2. From the list prepared in answer to the first question above, select the three developments that you assess to be the most important as determined by their long-term impact upon the life of the church and the proclamation and application of the gospel? For each development, formulate a cogent description which includes all relevant historical detail, your rationale for determining its importance, and an assessment of its long-term impact.
3. Discuss your sharpened understanding of the biblical concept of tradition as that which is handed down or over as a result of your study of the Medieval & Renaissance Periods.

Scripture Readings for Part 2.4 – The Reformation & Post-Reformation Periods

Reread and continue to reflect upon the passages listed under Part 2.2.

Theological Readings for Part 2.4 – The Reformation & Post-Reformation Periods

Read the following in preparation for responding to the questions and issues for Part 2.4:

7. *The Twelve Great Debates: Reformation & Post-Reformation Periods*, by David Preston.

Questions and Issues for Part 2.4 – The Reformation & Post-Reformation Periods

Of the twelve great debates, three occurred during the Reformation & Post-Reformation Periods (ca. 1500 – 1650 AD). These three are as follows:

- ◆ How should we represent justification by grace through faith? In particular, is salvation accessible to all or only to some? And, how should we represent the interaction between the sovereign grace of God and human responsibility?
- ◆ How should we represent a Christian church?
- ◆ How should biblical data interact with the findings of science?

For each of these three controversies you are to address the following questions and issues under Part 2.4:

1. Discuss the historical background of the issue, including the factors and developments in the prior period that gave rise to and contributed to shaping it. Include in your discussion the identification of the principal characters or groups who argued each side of the issue and the manner in which the issue was resolved. Include all relevant historical details such as dates, people, places, and councils.
2. Formulate a cogent, carefully worded statement of the theological issue that is at stake. Assess the impact of the issue on the gospel and its application – that is, the Christian tradition once for all delivered by the apostles to the church of the 1st century. How critical is the issue to the life and ministry of the church?
3. Critically evaluate the handling of the issue by the Reformers. What biblical principles were applied, and were they applied correctly according to your evaluation? Were there non-theological factors (e.g., political, philosophical, or scientific) that impacted the debate, and, if so, how did they influence the outcome?
4. Are there contemporary embodiments of the issue in question with which the church is still wrestling? If so, in what form do these contemporary embodiments present themselves?
5. Based upon all your research in regard to the issue in question, what lessons should be derived from the manner in which the issue has been handled from the 16th century AD to the present, and what application do these lessons have on the life and ministry of the church in the 21st century.
6. Discuss your sharpened understanding of the biblical concept of tradition as that which is handed down or over as a result of your study of the controversies of the Reformation & Post-Reformation Periods.

Scripture Readings for Part 2.5 – The Modern & Postmodern Periods

Reread and continue to reflect upon the passages listed under Part 2.2.

Theological Readings for Part 2.5 – The Modern & Postmodern Periods

Read the following in preparation for responding to the questions and issues for Part 2.5:

8. *The Twelve Great Debates: Modern & Postmodern Periods*, by David Preston.

Questions and Issues for Part 2.5 – The Modern & Postmodern Periods

Of the twelve great debates, three occurred during the Modern & Postmodern Periods (ca. 1650 AD – present). These three are as follows:

- ◆ Should the Bible be subject to critical analysis like any other ancient document? If so, who should perform such critical analysis?
- ◆ How should we represent the Christian gospel, and what constitutes a saving response to the gospel? This is the so-called “lordship salvation” controversy.
- ◆ Does God exhaustively and perfectly know the future choices that humans will make, and, if so, how does such knowledge interact with human freedom? This is the so-called “open theism” controversy.

For each of these three controversies you are to address the following questions and issues under Part 2.5:

1. Discuss the historical background of the issue, including the factors and developments in the prior period that gave rise to and contributed to shaping it. Include in your discussion the identification of the principal characters or groups who argued each side of the issue and the manner in which the issue was resolved. Include all relevant historical details such as dates, people, places, and councils.
2. Formulate a cogent, carefully worded statement of the theological issue that is at stake. Assess the impact of the issue on the gospel and its application – that is, the Christian tradition once for all delivered by the apostles to the church of the 1st century. How critical is the issue to the life and ministry of the church?
3. Critically evaluate the handling of the issue by the church. What biblical principles were applied, and were they applied correctly according to your evaluation? Were there non-theological factors (e.g., political, philosophical, or scientific) that impacted the debate, and, if so, how did they influence the outcome?
4. Are there contemporary embodiments of the issue in question with which the church is still wrestling? If so, in what form do these contemporary embodiments present themselves?
5. Based upon all your research in regard to the issue in question, what lessons should be derived from the manner in which the issue has been handled, and what application do these lessons have on the life and ministry of the church in the 21st century.
6. Discuss your sharpened understanding of the biblical concept of tradition as that which is handed down or over as a result of your study of the controversies of the Modern & Postmodern Periods.

PART 3 – KNOWING THE FEAR OF THE LORD: APPRECIATING THE IMPORTANCE OF BIBLICAL REPRESENTATIONS

Learning Objective for Part 3

The learning objective of Part 3 is to gain an appreciation for the Bible as a determinative representational system and the life-critical importance of biblical representations in the project of building a Christian worldview.

Scripture Readings for Part 3.1 – Definitions and the Life-Critical Importance of Biblical Representations

Read the following Scripture passages in preparation for the discussion under Part 3.1:

- ◆ Romans 12:1-2
- ◆ 1 Corinthians 10:1-13
- ◆ Hebrews 3:7 – 4:13
- ◆ Numbers 13 & 14
- ◆ Deuteronomy 1:19-46
- ◆ 1 Samuel 17

Theological Readings for Part 3.1

Read the following in preparation for responding to the questions and issues for Part 3.1:

9. *Knowing the Fear of the Lord: An Introduction to Representational Theology – Part One*, a lecture by Peter Briggs.

Questions and Issues for Part 3.1

The questions and issues for Part 3.1 are as follows:

1. Formulate in your own words a definition for and an expression of the practical significance of each of the following technical terms:
 - a) Representation
 - b) Interpretive framework
 - c) Representational world
2. Based upon all your research thus far, discuss the differences between a godly and an ungodly representational world. On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = not at all important and 5 = life-critically important, evaluate the importance of a Christian's operating within a godly representational world. Discuss the rationale for your evaluation. Discuss the role of community in the development of a godly representational world.
3. Select a biblical episode other than the Kadesh Barnea and the David & Goliath episodes which illustrates the interaction of faith, a godly representational world, the unleashing of the power of God, and the experience of the Christian life. Discuss practical examples of how the principle of a godly representational world has worked in your own life and ministry.

Scripture Readings for Part 3.2 – Examples of Biblical Representations

Read the following Scripture passages in preparation for the discussion under Part 3.2:

- ◆ Romans 12:3-8
- ◆ Philippians 2:1-11
- ◆ Matthew 5:1-48
- ◆ Matthew 18:1-35
- ◆ 1 Corinthians 5:1-13, 6:12-20 & 7:1-16; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8
- ◆ Ephesians 5:22-33
- ◆ Colossians 3:18-25
- ◆ 1 Peter 3:1-7
- ◆ 1 Corinthians 11:2-16

Theological Readings for Part 3.2

Read the following in preparation for responding to the questions and issues for Part 3.1:

10. *Knowing the Fear of the Lord: An Introduction to Representational Theology – Part Two*, a lecture by Peter Briggs.

Questions and Issues for Part 3.2

The questions and issues for Part 3.2 are as follows:

1. Based upon all your research concerning examples of biblical representations, select the three examples which are the most significant from your perspective. For each of the selected biblical representations, state the rationale for your selection and then cogently discuss the significance of the representation to your life and ministry, including specific applications that you have been able to make.
2. Analyze Romans 12:3-8 and Philippians 2:1-11 and cogently discuss the representational issue that lies at the heart of pride.
3. Analyze Matthew 5:1-48. Identify and cogently discuss each of the representational issues that surface in this portion of Christ's Sermon on the Mount.
4. Analyze Matthew 18:1-35. Identify and cogently discuss each of the representational issues that surface in Christ's discourse on how we should respond to offensive behavior on the part of others within the community of faith.
5. Analyze 1 Corinthians 5:1-13, 6:12-20 & 7:1-16 and 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8. Identify and cogently discuss each of the representational issues that surface in these passages, including their practical applications.
6. Analyze Ephesians 5:22-33, Colossians 3:18-25, and 1 Peter 3:1-7. Identify and cogently discuss each of the representational issues that surface in Paul's and Peter's teaching on the proper ordering of the Christian household.

7. Identify and cogently discuss the representational issue that lies at the heart of the abortion controversy. Cite Scripture passages that provide a biblical representation of the inception of human life. How would you apologetically address this issue in a hypothetical conversation with a friend that is contemplating an abortion?
8. Identify and cogently discuss the representational issue that lies at the heart of the feminist controversy. Discuss the biblical representation of headship from 1 Corinthians 11:2-16.

PART 4 – THE ESCHATON: THE STORY OF THE END OF HISTORY AND ITS RELEVANCE TO BUILDING A CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW

Learning Objective for Part 4

The learning objective of Part 4 is to gain an appreciation for the *Eschaton* – that is, the circumstances and events that are associated with the second coming of Jesus Christ – including their relevance to the project of building a Christian worldview.

Part 4.1 – The Olivet Discourse: The Key to Understanding the Time Line of the *Eschaton*

Learning Objective for Part 4.1

The learning objective for Part 4.1 is to gain an appreciation for the Olivet Discourse – especially Matthew’s version – as the key to understanding the *Eschaton*. A secondary learning objective is gain an appreciation for the several views concerning the *Eschaton*.

Scripture Readings for Part 4.1

Read the following Scripture passages in preparation for the discussion under Part 4.1:

- ◆ Matthew 24:1 – 25:46
- ◆ Mark 13:1-37
- ◆ Luke 21:5-36
- ◆ 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11
- ◆ Daniel 9:20-27
- ◆ 13th chapter of Revelation

Theological Readings for Part 4.1

Read the following in preparation for responding to the questions and issues for Part 4.1:

11. *The Eschaton: The Story of the End of History – Part One*, a lecture by Peter Briggs.

Peruse the following in preparation for responding to the questions and issues for Part 4.1:

27. *Things to Come*, by Dwight Pentacost.
28. *The Last Days According to Jesus*, by R. C. Sproul.
29. *The Blessed Hope*, by George Eldon Ladd.
30. *The Pre-Wrath Rapture of the Church*, by Marvin Rosenthal.

31. *The Final Prophecy of Jesus: An Introduction, Analysis, and Commentary on the Book of Revelation*, by Oral Edmond Collins.

Questions and Issues for Part 4.1

The questions and issues for Part 4.1 are as follows:

1. Formulate in your own words a cogent summary of each of the following seven views concerning the Eschaton:
 - a) Historicist
 - b) Preterist
 - c) Futurist
 - d) Amillennialist
 - e) Postmillennialist
 - f) Dispensational premillennialist
 - g) Historical premillennialist
2. Based upon all your research thus far, identify and discuss the key event that Jesus identifies as the sign of the imminence of his return.
3. Sketch the unfolding geo-political scenario that immediately precedes, accompanies, and follows this key event. Identify and briefly discuss the aspects of this scenario that appear to be clearly revealed and therefore certain, and those with which is associated some fuzziness or uncertainty.

Part 4.2 – The Visions of Daniel: The Key to Understanding the Figures of the *Eschaton*

Learning Objective for Part 4.2

The learning objective for Part 4.2 is to gain an appreciation for the visions of Daniel as the key to understanding the figures of the *Eschaton*, especially as represented by the Apostle John in the Book of Revelation.

Scripture Readings for Part 4.2

Read the following Scripture passages in preparation for the discussion under Part 4.2:

- ◆ Book of Daniel (peruse entire book and study the 2nd, 7th, and 8th chapters)
- ◆ 13th chapter of Revelation

Theological Readings for Part 4.2

Read the following in preparation for responding to the questions and issues for Part 4.2:

12. *The Eschaton: The Story of the End of History – Part Two*, a lecture by Peter Briggs.

Questions and Issues for Part 4.2

The questions and issues for Part 4.2 are as follows:

1. Identify the beast visions of Daniel with the succession of empires that would rule the ancient world. Place in evidence the correspondence between the beast visions and the parts of the colossal image seen by Nebuchadnezzar in his dream. **Hint:** Create a table with columns for the colossal image of the 2nd chapter, the beasts of the 7th chapter, and the beasts of the 8th chapter. This will provide a framework for visualizing the correspondence among the parts of the colossal image and the two sets of beasts.
2. Discuss the correspondence between the fourth beast of Daniel 7:7ff, the beast from the sea in Revelation 13:1-10, and the beast on which the prostitute rides of the 17th chapter of revelation. Based upon all your research thus far, discuss the significance of these three visions. **Hint:** Extend the table created for the 1st question with columns for the beast from the sea of Revelation 13:1-10 and the beast on which the prostitute rides of the 17th chapter of Revelation.
3. Based upon all your research thus far, discuss the significance and correspondence of “the abomination of desolation spoken of by the prophet Daniel” in Matthew 24:15, the statement in Daniel 9:27, and the states of affairs represented by Matthew 24:15-28 and Revelation 13:11-18.
4. Based upon all your research thus far, discuss the biblical representation of the state of affairs that will prevail on the earth just prior to the second coming of Christ, including its geo-political dimension and the conditions experienced by disciples of Christ.

Part 4.3 – Putting the Puzzle Pieces Together: Understanding the Man of Lawlessness and the Day of Yahweh

Learning Objective for Part 4.3

The learning objective for Part 4.3 is gain an appreciation for the integrated teaching of the prophets and apostles concerning the events and circumstances that will attend the second coming of Jesus Christ to rescue his elect and to pour out the wrath of God upon the wicked. The technical term that is employed throughout Scripture to designate this event is the **day of Yahweh** (which corresponds to the day of the Lord in the Christian Scriptures). The Greek word that is commonly translated “coming” in the biblical representations of this event is *parousia*, which means an arrival followed by an abiding presence.

Scripture Readings for Part 4.3

Read the following Scripture passages in preparation for the discussion under Part 4.3:

- ◆ Peruse 1 & 2 Thessalonians in their entirety; study carefully each of the passages that pertain to the day of Yahweh.
- ◆ Peruse 2 Peter in its entirety; study carefully the passages that pertain to the day of Yahweh.
- ◆ Peruse the Book of Revelation in its entirety.

Suggestion: An effective way to peruse these four books to gain an overall appreciation for their teaching is to listen to them being read aloud, such as from a CD recording.

Theological Readings for Part 4.3

Read the following in preparation for responding to the questions and issues for Part 4.3:

13. *The Eschaton: The Story of the End of History – Part Three*, a lecture by Peter Briggs.

Questions and Issues for Part 4.3

The questions and issues for Part 4.3 are as follows:

1. Based upon all your research thus far, create your own time line of eschatological events. Identify and briefly discuss each of the important events and periods delineated in your time line.
2. Concentrating on the 2nd chapter of 2 Thessalonians, discuss the manifestation of the “man of lawlessness.” In particular, address the following:
 - ◆ The identity of the one “who now restrains” in the 7th verse and the significance of his standing aside or coming out of the way.
 - ◆ The “strong delusion” spoken of in the 11th verse and worldwide apostasy that it will precipitate.
 - ◆ The correspondence between Paul’s teaching in this passage and the vision of the Apostle John as recorded in the 13th chapter of Revelation.
3. Identify and discuss each of the consummating judgments that are included in the day of Yahweh. ***Hint:*** Your dealing with this subject will require integration of multiple Scripture passages.
4. Focusing upon the 3rd chapter of 2 Peter and the four parables included in Matthew’s Olivet Discourse, discuss the relevance of the *eschaton* to your life and ministry in the present.

RESEARCH AND APPLICATION PROJECTS

Perform the first and one other of the following projects to complete this course of study:

- ◆ **Reading & Research.** Select from Items (a) through (zc) a total of 400 pages for reading and research that are not prescribed in the *Shared Learning in Community* section of this syllabus. Document your reading and research in fulfillment of this module by means of an annotated bibliography. Your annotated bibliography shall include the following:
 - ▶ For each resource you have consulted, cite complete reference information in accordance with an approved academic format (e.g., APA or Turabian).
 - ▶ For each portion of a resource that you have consulted, cite the page range and summarize the key findings, insights, or concepts that you have derived from that page range.
 - ▶ In addition, summarize your analysis and evaluation of the author's arguments. Also, summarize any creative synthesis of the author's ideas with ideas derived from your other research.
- ◆ **Teaching Application.** Develop a plan for a series of teaching sessions or seminars that are aligned with the learning objectives for this course of study. Your plan should be patterned according to this syllabus and should include a brief description, a set of learning objectives, a list of materials pertinent to the learning objectives, and an outline of the lectures or seminars. Actually perform the teaching sessions or lead the seminars you have outlined, and request three of the class members to evaluate the quality and content of the teaching sessions or seminars in terms of how well the stated learning objectives were achieved.
- ◆ **Preaching Application.** Develop a plan for a series of at least three sermons or messages that are aligned with the learning objectives for this course of study. Your plan shall include a clear definition of the overall objective of the series as well as that for each of the individual messages. For each of the messages, it shall include the biblical passages on which the message is based and an outline of the message. Actually deliver the messages you have outlined, and request three of the members of your audience to evaluate the quality and content of the messages in terms of how well the stated objectives were achieved.
- ◆ **Research Paper.** Prepare and deliver to a critical audience a formal research paper that is aligned with the learning objectives for this course of study. Your paper shall consist of at least the following parts or sections:
 - ▶ An abstract that presents a one-page summative overview of the paper, including its principal findings and conclusions.
 - ▶ An introduction that states the purpose of the paper and a summary of the motivating theological problems or issues.
 - ▶ A section which precisely defines the research question or issue being addressed and includes a definition of the terminology and concepts that are employed in your analysis.
 - ▶ A section which summarizes and evaluates the pertinent prior research on the research question or issue being addressed. Reference citations and quotations shall be in accordance with an approved academic format (e.g., APA or Turabian).
 - ▶ An analytical section which includes a careful exegesis of the biblical texts on which your research is based and a synthesis of a resolution to the research question or issue.

- ▶ A conclusion which summarizes the important results of your research.
- ▶ A list of references prepare in accordance with an approved academic format (e.g., APA or Turabian).

Request three members of your audience to evaluate your paper in terms of the significance of the research question or issue addressed, the quality of your research, and the clarity of your presentation.

- ◆ ***Personal Project*** of your own design. Design and propose a project of special interest to you which is aligned with the learning objectives of this course of study and the scope of which is consistent with the other project options defined above. Present your proposal to your mentor for approval and modify it as needed in accordance with your mentor's directions.