

Episcopal Theological School at Claremont
Major Christian Doctrines EP133
Fall Semester 2017
Instructor: Michael J. McGrath, Ph.D.
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Course Description:

A study of the major theological doctrines of the Christian faith, particularly as they have been expressed in the liberal, neo-orthodox, and evangelical theological traditions of the Church, for the purpose of understanding the task of theology, its doctrinal formulations and their systematic interrelationship.

Texts:

Karl Barth, *Dogmatics in Outline* (Harper & Row)

Stanley J. Grenz and Jay T. Smith, *Created For Community: Connecting Christian Belief with Christian Living*, Third Edition (Baker)

George A. Lindbeck, *The Nature of Doctrine: Religion and Theology in a Postliberal Age*, 25th Anniversary Edition (Westminster)

John Macquarrie, *Principles of Christian Theology*, 2nd Edition (Macmillan)

Sallie McFague, *Models of God: Theology for an Ecological, Nuclear Age* (Fortress)

*Recommended Text:

Samuel E. Stumpf and James Fieser, *Socrates to Sartre and Beyond*, 7th Ed. (McGraw-Hill, 2003)

Learning Objectives:

- Define systematic theology
- Identify the task, methods, and sources of systematic theology
- Compare and understand distinct perspectives within 20th century systematic theology (up to 1970), focusing on liberal, neo-orthodox, and evangelical theology
- Show how these perspectives affect the formulation of Christian doctrine
- Facilitate the student's recognition and understanding of their own theological perspective
- Articulate these understandings in the form of two written papers

Grading: Based on class participation and two take-home examinations

Course Outline:

Aug 18 Introduction to the Course

Theology: Task, Sources, Method

Aug 25 Macquarrie, pp. 1-58, Barth, pp. 9-14, Grenz, pp. xvii-xxix, 129-40 (2nd ed.: 9-25, 164-75).
*Stumpf, 153-56 (ch. 7: Anselm); 167-73 (ch. 8: Aquinas); 267-73 (ch. 11: Hume); 284-89 (ch. 12: Kant)

"I believe in God..."

Sept 8 Macquarrie, pp. 59-148, Barth, pp. 15-41, Grenz, pp. 1-14 (27-40).
*Stumpf, 356-62 (ch. 15: Kierkegaard); 445-56 (ch. 18: Husserl and Heidegger); 476-79 (ch. 19: Ryle—the Ghost in the Machine)

"...the Father almighty..."

Sept 22 Macquarrie, pp. 177-210, Barth, pp. 42-49, 65-71, Grenz, pp. 15-33 (41-60).

Exam

"...creator of heaven and earth."

Sept 29 Macquarrie, pp. 211-67; Barth, pp. 50-64, Grenz, pp. 33-76 (60-106).

"I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord..."

Oct 13 Macquarrie, pp. 268-310, Barth, pp. 72-100, Grenz, pp. 77-98 (107-30).
Exam due

"...was crucified, died, and was buried...on the third day he rose again..."

Oct 27 Macquarrie, pp. 311-27, Barth, pp. 101-23, Grenz, pp. 99-118 (131-52).

"...I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church..."

Nov 10 Macquarrie, pp. 328-50, 373-413, Barth, pp. 124-28, 137-48, Grenz, pp. 119-89 (153-228).

"...the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen."

Nov 17 Macquarrie, pp. 351-70, Barth, pp. 129-36, 149-55, Grenz, pp. 213-55 (252-97).

Exam

Dec 8

Critical Responses:

Lindbeck, pp. xxxiii-xxxviii, 1-76, 98-124 (1984 ed.: 7-90, 112-38);
McFague, pp. 91-187.

*Stumpf, 422-40 (ch. 17: Analytic Philosophy—Russell, Logical Positivism, Wittgenstein)

Exam due: Postmark December 22, 2017