

# Analytic Philosophy as Theological Handmaiden

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## COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course aims to introduce students of theology to the historical role philosophy has played in the construction and development of Christian doctrine. The course will use the following traditional theological loci (*loci communes*) as a lens: *Prolegomena* (Method), *De Scriptura Sacra* (Holy Scripture), *De Deo* (God), *De Christo* (Christ), *De Homine* (Man), *De Peccato* (Sin), and *De Gratia* (Salvation). A special emphasis will be placed on how philosophy has traditionally been and can continue to be valuable in the theological task. The main body of the course will consist in exploring how particular theologians in the Christian tradition (esp. St. Augustine, St. Anselm, St. Thomas Aquinas, John Calvin, Francis Turretin, and Jonathan Edwards) have used biblically constrained philosophical inquiry in the service of theology to help (a) *frame theological questions*, (b) *establish and defend the conceptual coherence of particular Christian doctrines*, and (c) *further clarify and analyze theological concepts*. Along the way, students will receive a brief introduction to key philosophical concepts in metaphysics and epistemology that have been used to carry out the above aims, in addition to important contemporary philosophical developments that have informed the above theological loci. The course will conclude with a brief section on philosophy in the service of Christian ministry and formation.

## TEXTS

### *Required*

- Thomas McCall. *An Invitation to Analytic Christian Theology* (IVP Academic, 2015)
- Selected Online Readings

## *Selected Bibliography*

### *History & Key Figures*

- Norman Melchert, *The Great Conversation: A Historical Introduction to Philosophy*, 7<sup>th</sup> Edition (Oxford University Press, 2004)
- Gareth Matthews, *Augustine* (Wiley Blackwell, 2005)
- Thomas Williams and Sandra Visser, *Anselm* (Oxford University Press, 2008)
- Robert Pasnau and Christopher Shields, *The Philosophy of Aquinas*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition (Oxford University Press, 2016)
- Richard Cross, *Duns Scotus* (Oxford University Press, 1999)
- Paul Helm, *John Calvin's Ideas* (Oxford University Press, 2006)
- Aza Goudriaan, "Theology and Philosophy" in *Companion to Reformed Orthodoxy*, Herman Selderhuis (ed.) (Brill, 20013)
- Richard Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics: Prolegomena to Theology*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition (Baker, 2003)
- Oliver Crisp, *Jonathan Edwards on God and Creation* (Oxford University Press)
- Paul Helm and Oliver Crisp (eds.), *Jonathan Edwards: Philosophical Theologian* (Ashgate, 2003)
- Michael McClymond and Gerald McDermott, *The Theology of Jonathan Edwards* (Oxford University Press, 2011)

### *General*

- William Abraham (ed.), *Analytic Theology: A Bibliography* (Highland Loch Press, 2012)
- Diogenes Allen, *Philosophy for Understanding Theology*, Second Edition (Westminster John Knox, 2007)
- Diogenes Allen and Eric Springsted, *Primary Readings in Philosophy for Understanding Theology* (Westminster John Knox, 1997)
- Kelly James Clark and Richard Lints, *101 Key Terms in Philosophy and Their Importance for Theology* (Westminster John Knox Press, 2004)
- Oliver Crisp and Michael Rea (eds.) *Analytic Theology: New Essays* (Oxford University Press,
- Paul Helm (ed.), *Faith & Reason* (Oxford University Press, 1999)
- Paul Helm, *Faith and Understanding* (Eerdmans, 1997)
- Scott Oliphint, *Reasons for Faith: Philosophy in the Service of Theology* (P&R Publishing, 2006)

<b>COURSE REQUIREMENTS</b>
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### **Writing Assignments**

All written assignments must be double-spaced, have 1" margins, and use 12 pt. Times New Roman font. Instead of using a cover paper, simply type in the upper corner: Student name, the title of the assignment, and the student email address.

#### **1. Position Paper (15%)**

Students will submit a concise 4-6-page position paper on a topic from one of the following theological loci from section III, IV, or V. The central aim of the paper is to explore a particular way in which the resources of analytic philosophy (e.g. clarity, rigor, conceptual analysis) have been used to further develop, clarify, or defend a particular Christian doctrine. Further details will be given in class.

#### **2. Quizzes (total 10%)**

A short quiz will be given **twice** during the semester (9/18 and 11/20). The in-class quiz will consist of the student writing a brief essay on one of the topics or historical figures previously discussed in class. The topic of each quiz will not be revealed beforehand. Careful reading of assigned text and active participation in each class should suffice for an exemplary quiz grade.

#### **3. Class Participation (10%)**

Participating in class is not the same as attending class. Because of the nature of the topic, much of the class will involve student participation. Contributions from each student are not only expected in a seminary-level course, but are crucial to the overall success of the course. The student will earn participation points by contributing, in a relevant way, to the class discussion at hand. It is imperative that the assigned material is read before class each day and that the students are prepared to engage the reading(s) in class.

#### **4. Scheduled Reading (10%)**

Students are required to thoughtfully engage the assigned course material in its entirety. Students should be prepared to discuss and interact with the reading material upon each class meeting and will report percentage (in increments of 10, e.g., 70%, 80%) of reading completed at the end of the semester.

#### **5. Book Précis (10%)**

Students will also write an 850-950 **word** précis of Thomas McCall's book *An Invitation to Analytic Christian Theology* (see Required Texts above). A précis is a concise

explanatory summary with approximately 300 words of critical evaluation. **The word limit is strictly enforced.** The professor will provide a Handout for further information on how to write a précis.

#### **6. Research Paper Outline and Annotated Bibliography (5%)**

In advance of writing the Research Paper, the student will turn in a proposed outline and annotated bibliography with at least 7 research references. Paper topics must be approved by instructor.

#### **7. Research Paper (40%)**

The research paper, worth 40% of the final grade, should be 13-15 pages in length, and written on a topic directly related to those discussed in class or in the assigned reading. The topic of the research paper must be substantially different from the topic of the position paper. The aim of the research paper is to present a thesis or argument, explain the thesis, and then either (1) offer an argument in support of it, (2) offer an objection to it, (3) defend against an objection, (4) evaluate the arguments for and against it, (5) discuss what consequences it might have, (6) determine whether some other thesis or argument commits one to it, or (7) determine whether some other view can be held consistently with it. For a basic illustration of a properly formatted philosophy paper, see the handout “A Brief Guide to Writing a Philosophy Paper” that is available on the course website. The research paper is due the last day of class.

#### **\*Extra Credit Opportunity\* (3%)**

Read John Wesley’s essay “An Address to the Clergy” and write a four (4) page reflection as to how one might use philosophy in the service of theology and Christian ministry, particularly as it pertains to clarifying and defending “sound doctrine” (2 Cor. 10:5; Titus 1:9; Jude 3; 1 Peter 3:15). What might the ministerial use of philosophy in the service to the Gospel look like from the pulpit, Sunday school class, or in youth/kids ministry? Do you agree or disagree with the vision of the role of philosophy in pastoral ministry outlined by Wesley? In what sense are philosophy and apologetics important for pastors as spokespersons for Christ and the gospel in today’s culture? What might this look like in your own ministry? The extra credit assignment must be submitted on or before the last day of class.

<b>READING LIST</b>
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“Selections” denote brief excerpts from the noted text

H=Historical Source

C=Contemporary Source

## I. Prolegomena: Methodological Preliminaries

### **Week 1: *Historical and Contemporary Views on the Relationship Between Philosophy and Theology***

H: Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine* II.40; Anselm *Proslogion* Ch. 1 (Ministerial use of reason)

H: Martin Luther, selections from *Sermon on Matthew 19:13-15*

H: Locke, *The Reasonableness of Christianity* selections from the section “A second Vindication of the Reasonableness of Christianity.” (Magisterial use of reason)

H: Francis Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, I.1.8-9 (Ministerial use of reason)

C: Oliver Crisp, “On Analytic Theology” in *Analytic Theology: New Essays*

C: William Abraham, “Systematic Theology as Analytic Theology” in *Analytic Theology: New Essays*

### **Week 2: *Philosophical & Theological Roadblocks to Robust Systematic Theology***

H: Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, selections from Book II, Chapter III “The Ideal of Pure Reason”

H: Friedrich Schleiermacher, selections from *The Christian Faith*, Chapter 1 (“The Definition of Dogmatics”) and Chapter 2 (“The Method of Dogmatics”)

C: Nicholas Wolterstorff, “Is it Possible and Desirable for Theologians to Recover from Kant?” in *Modern Theology*

C: Alvin Plantinga, “Kant” in *Warranted Christian Belief*, Ch. 1

C: Andrew Dole, “Schleiermacher’s Theological Anti-Realism” in *Analytic Theology: New Essays*

## II. De Scriptura Sacra: Doctrine of Holy Scripture

### **Week 3: *Inspiratio et Auctoritas: Inspiration and Authority***

*Contemporary Philosophical Concepts:* varieties of foundationalism, epistemic justification/warrant, properly basic beliefs, speech-act theory, epistemology of testimony

H: Augustine, Letter to Jerome, letter 82

H: John Calvin, *Institutes*, Book I, Chapters 6-8

H: John Owen, “On the Divine Original, Authority, and Self-evidencing Light and Power of the Scriptures,” Chapters 1 and 2.

C: J. P. Moreland, “The Rationality of Belief in Inerrancy” in *Trinity Journal*

C: William Lane Craig, selection from “Men Moved By The Holy Spirit Spoke From God’ (2 Peter 1.21): A Middle Knowledge Perspective on Biblical Inspiration” in *Philosophia Christi*

C: Alvin Plantinga, selections from Ch. 8 of *Warranted Christian Belief*

### III. De Deo: Doctrine of God

#### **Weeks 4 & 5: *De Trinitate: Doctrine of the Trinity***

*Contemporary Philosophical Concepts:* Identity, Dependence, Substance, Essence, Person, Internal/External Relations

H: The Nicæan and Athanasian Creeds

H: Cappadocian Fathers: Gregory of Nyssa “To Ablabius: “On ‘Not Three Gods’”; selections from Gregory of Nazianzus “Theological Orations: Fifth Theological Oration—On the Spirit”

H: Augustine, selections from books 1, 9, 10, & 14 *On the Trinity*

H: Jonathan Edwards, selections from “Discourse on the Trinity”

C: Jeffrey Brower and Michael Rea, “Understanding the Trinity” in *Logos*

C: Brian Leftow, “A Latin Trinity” in *Faith and Philosophy*

C: Jeffrey Brower and Michael Rea, “Material Constitution and the Trinity” in *Faith and Philosophy*

### IV. De Homine & De Peccato: Doctrine of Man & Doctrine of Sin

#### **Weeks 6 & 7: *De Anthropologia: Doctrine of Man***

*Contemporary Philosophical Concepts:* human dignity and rights, nature and origin of the soul, mind-body dualism, physicalism

H: Augustine, selections from books 12-14 of *On the Trinity*

H: Aquinas, selections from *Summa Theologiae* Ia, q. 75-76

C: Trenton Merricks, “The Word Made Flesh: Dualism, Physicalism, and the Incarnation” in *Persons: Human and Divine*

C: Jeffrey Brower, “The Afterlife”, Ch. 13 of *Aquinas’s Ontology of the Material World*

C: Alvin Plantinga, “Materialism and Christian Belief” in *Persons: Human and Divine*

C: Mark McLeod-Harrison, “On Being the Literal Image of God” in *Journal of Analytic Theology*

#### **Week 8 & 9: *De Peccato Originali: Doctrine of Original Sin***

*Contemporary Philosophical Concepts:* metaphysics of persistence, personal identity, freedom of the will, guilt/moral responsibility

H: Augustine, selections *City of God*, books 12-14

H: Aquinas, selections from *Summa Theologiae* 2.1 q. 82-83.

H: Francis Turretin, selection from *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, I.8-9

H: Jonathan Edwards, selection from *Original Sin*, II.1-2, and II.4

- C: Paul Copan, "Original Sin and Christian Philosophy" in *Philosophia Christi*  
 C: Oliver Crisp, "Original Sin and Atonement" in *Oxford Handbook to Philosophical Theology*  
 C: Michael Rea, "The Metaphysics of Original Sin" in *Persons: Human and Divine*  
 C: Robert Adams, "Original Sin: A Study in the Interaction of Philosophy and Theology"

**Week 10: *De Libero Arbitrio: Freedom of the Will***

*Contemporary Philosophical Concepts:* causal determinism, causal power and notions of "ability", varieties of libertarianism and compatibilism

H: Augustine, selections *On the Free Choice of the Will*, book 2 & 3

H: Anselm, *On Freedom of Choice*, Ch. 1-3

H: Jonathan Edwards, *Freedom of the Will*, Part I

C: Kevin Timpe, *Free Will and Philosophical Theology*, Ch. 5

C: Thomas McCall, pp. 57-81 "Case Study: Biblical Theology and Compatibilism" in *Invitation to Analytic Theology*

**V. De Christo: Christology**

**Weeks 11 & 12: *De Persona Christi: The Person of Christ***

*Contemporary Philosophical Concepts:* Identity, Person, Essence/Nature/Substance, Mind

H: "Definition of Faith", selection from Council of Chalcedon

H: Gregory Nazianzus, "Letters on the Appolinarian Controversy: To Cleodnius Against Appolinaris" & *Orationes* 30

H: Maximus the Confessor, *Opusculum* 3 & 7

H: Francis Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology* bk. 3, topic 13, q. VI-VIII

C: Richard Cross, "Incarnation" in *Oxford Handbook to Philosophical Theology*

C: Thomas V. Morris, "The Metaphysics of God Incarnate" in *Oxford Readings in Philosophical Theology*

C: Oliver Crisp, "Did Christ Have a Fallen Human Nature?" in *Divinity and Humanity*

**VI. De Gratia: Soteriology**

**Week 13: *De Conversione: Conversion & Regeneration***

*Contemporary Philosophical Concepts:* change/alteration, ontology of powers, causation, free will, epistemology of testimony

H: Augustine, *Answer to the Two Letters of the Pelagians*, 2.18, 21-22; 4:14

H: Jonathan Edwards, Sermon "Divine and Supernatural light"

H: Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* Pt. 4, sec. 6-7

C: William Abraham, "The Epistemology of Conversion: Is There Something New?" in *Conversion in the Wesleyan Tradition*

C: Kevin Timpe, "Realigning a Fallen Will", *Free Will and Philosophical Theology* Ch. 4

**Week 14: *De Inhabitatio Spiritus Sancti: Indwelling of the Holy Spirit***

*Contemporary Philosophical Concepts*: union, causation, shared attention/second person perspective

H: Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles* IV, 21-22

H: Jonathan Edwards, selections from *Treatise on Grace*, Ch. 3

C: William Alston, "The Indwelling of the Holy Spirit" in *Philosophy and the Christian Faith*

C: Ray Yeo, "Towards a Model of Indwelling: A Conversation with Jonathan Edwards and William Alston" in *The Journal of Analytic Theology*

**Week 15: *Unio cum Christo: Union with Christ***

*Contemporary Philosophical Concepts*: persistence, composition/unity relations, substance, accident

H: John Calvin, selections from books 3 & 5 of *The Bondage and Liberation of the Will*

H: Jonathan Edwards, selection from *Treatise on Grace*

H: Augustus H. Strong, selection from "Union with Christ" in *Systematic Theology* v. 3, pt. 6, ch. 2, sec. 2.

C: Ross Inman & Carl Mosser, "The Metaphysics of Union with God" [unpublished]

C: Michael W. Austin, "The Doctrine of Theosis: A Transformational Union with Christ" in *Journal for Spiritual Formation and Soul Care*

**VII. Philosophy & Christian Formation**

**Week 16: Philosophy for Christian Ministry and Formation**

H: Anselm, Prologue to *Proslogion*

H: John Wesley, "Address to the Clergy" in *Works of John Wesley*, v. 10

C: William Wood, "Analytic Theology as a Way of Life" in *The Journal of Analytic Theology*

C: Ross Inman, "Theology in the Second Person: Christian Dogmatics as a Mode of Prayer" [unpublished], or Ross Inman, "Epistemic Temperance and the Moral Perils of Intellectual Inquiry" in *Philosophia Christi*