

Humanity, Christ and Salvation

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Organizational Purpose

The Institute of Biblical Studies (IBS) exists to help develop Christ-centered missionaries who possess the biblical and theological competencies they need (head, heart and hands) to live out the Great Commandment and help fulfill the Great Commission through the ministry of Cru. This course explores several Christian doctrines that are foundational to our life and mission.

Course Description

What is the gospel? Few questions are more fundamental to our personal lives and organizational calling than this. Although we spend a lot of time and energy strategizing how to introduce men and women to the gospel, we often spend little time reflecting on the gospel itself. Furthermore, we often live as if the gospel is only for “lost” people and not also for those of us who have been “found.” In this class we will explore historic Christian teaching regarding the doctrine of humanity, the person and work of Christ, and the doctrine of salvation. Together these doctrines shape our understanding of the gospel. We will explore the *basis* of salvation in the Father’s sovereign plan; the *accomplishment* of salvation through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ; and the *application* of salvation to God’s children by the Holy Spirit. Because theology includes not merely what we believe but also how we live, we will also explore the ethical implications of these doctrines so that we may better live to the glory of the triune God. (2 IBS credits)

Course Objectives

1. Deepen your motivation to know, love and worship God and to reflect God’s character as an image-bearer.
2. Develop a deeper understanding of and commitment to the foundational doctrines of the Christian faith expressed in our Statement of Faith (particularly the doctrine of humanity, the person and work of Christ, and the doctrine of salvation).
3. Become more familiar with major viewpoints, differences, and conflicts which exist among Christians regarding these doctrines.
4. Become persuaded that Christian theology is not just about right beliefs (orthodoxy) but also right living (orthopraxy). Better understand the ethical implications of foundational doctrines.
5. Grow in your capacity to relate these doctrines to personal growth, evangelism, discipleship, movement-launching, and cross-cultural mission.
6. Grow in your ability to read Scripture “theologically.”
7. Be better prepared to partner with those who hold differing theological views allowing for difference of opinion on matters not central to our statement of faith and calling while pointing people to a compelling center (i.e., Christ, the gospel and our mission).
8. Develop a deeper understanding of and greater confidence in the gospel of Jesus Christ as well as the need to contextualize the gospel.

Required Texts

Robert E. Coleman, *The Heart of the Gospel: The Theology Behind the Master Plan of Evangelism* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011). ISBN: 9780801013706. This book discusses the key doctrines we will be discussing in this class and relates them to the gospel. Coleman writes from a Wesleyan/Arminian perspective. **[HG]**

Timothy Keller, *The Prodigal God: Recovering the Heart of the Christian Faith* (Penguin: New York City, 2008). ISBN-13: 978-1594484025 Keller uses the parable of the Prodigal Son to teach about the gospel. We will discuss this book in class each day. **[PG]**

Required Readings (Posted Online)

Thabiti Anyabwile, “An Apology to Beth Moore and My Sisters” (May 3, 2018).

Carl Ellis, Jr., “Biblical Righteousness Is a Four-Paned Window,” *The Gospel Coalition* (August 22, 2018).

Jayson Georges, “Talking about Faith in Non-Western Contexts,” *Modern Reformation* 27 (July 2017).

Justo L. González, *Mañana: Christian Theology from a Hispanic Perspective* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1990), chapter 1.

Bethany Hanke Hoang and Kristen Deede Johnson, *The Justice Calling: Where Passion Meets Perseverance* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2016), chapter 1.

Tim Keller, *Center Church: Doing Balanced, Gospel-Centered Ministry in Your City* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), chapter 9.

Eric Mason, *Woke Church: An Urgent Call for Christians in America to Confront Racism and Injustice* (Chicago: Moody, 2018), chapter 2.

Beth Moore, “A Letter to My Brothers” (May 3rd, 2018).

Adrian Pei, *The Minority Experience: Navigating Emotional and Organizational Realities* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2018), chapter 2.

Michael Reeves, *Delighting in the Trinity: An Introduction to the Christian Faith* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2012), chapter 3.

Scott Swain, “Ten Things You Should Know about Systematic Theology” *Gospel Coalition*.

Richard Wayne Wills, Sr. *Martin Luther King Jr. and the Image of God* (New York: Oxford, 2009), chapter 5.

You will also watch several videos read internal Cru documents outlining Cru’s approach to several issues.

Learning Tasks

1. **Zoom Sessions:** Class sessions will involve a mix of lecture and discussion (both with the whole class and in smaller groups). Just as you would arrive at class before the start time, we ready to go on your computer before our zoom sessions start.
2. **Reading:** You will be reading select chapters from two books (Coleman's *Heart of Evangelism* and Keller's *Prodigal God*) as well as several articles and videos posted online. Christian theology does not merely include what we believe (doctrines) but also how we live (ethics). Many of the additional readings explore the ethical implications of the doctrines we are studying (especially the doctrine of creation). **Given the compressed nature of this course, it is crucial to complete the reading prior to the first session.** See the "Course Schedule and Assignments" for a list of required readings. You will electronically submit a reading report indicating how much of the required reading you completed. **DUE: Friday, May 29 midnight eastern time (submit to Canvas)**
3. **Reading Reflection:** You will pick two readings (chapter or article) that impacted you during the class and write about your experience with them. What were the ideas from the chapter or article that connected with you? Why did you find them helpful? How did they challenge or encourage you? How do you want to apply them? Write a total of 500 words for BOTH readings (i.e., 250 per reading). (Note: Do not discuss *Prodigal God* since we are discussing that in class.) **DUE: Friday, May 29 midnight eastern time (submit to Canvas)**
4. **Case Studies:** You will compose responses to a series of case studies. These case studies integrate the doctrines we are studying in this class with practical ministry situations. They will be posted on the IBS website. **Due: Wednesday, May 27 midnight eastern time (submit to Canvas)**
5. **Daily Journal:** Throughout the class, you will keep a journal where you record what you are learning and experiencing. Each day you will write a short journal entry (100-150 words) reflecting on how you felt about something you heard or discovered in class that day. It could be something that surprised you, something you found helpful or something that upset you. Consider the following questions: What was the most important thing you heard or read in today's session? Why was it important? Was there anything you found challenging in today class or readings? Why? Was there anything that made you feel uncomfortable or with which you disagreed? What is one way your future life and ministry might be impacted by what was discussed today? In your final journal entry, talk about your biggest take-aways from the class. **Due after class each day (submit to Canvas)**
6. **Theology Project:** You will write a paper exploring the relationship between Trinity and salvation in Ephesians. *Be sure to consult the course notes from the session on Trinity and salvation.* These notes will give you some patterns to watch for as you read. In order to write this paper, you will need to take the following steps:
 - a. **Survey:** Read through the whole book of Ephesians. For each chapter, record your observations regarding the relationship between the Trinity and salvation. As you read, pay careful attention to the way Paul relates specific aspects of salvation to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (e.g., Paul associates the cross with the Son, not the Father or Holy Spirit). Be watching for patterns. You might make three columns as you take notes: one for the Father, another for the Son, and a third for the Holy Spirit. Observe what aspects of the work of salvation he associates with each person

and how they work together to accomplish salvation.

- b. Synthesize:** What stands out to you regarding the relationship of Trinity and salvation in Ephesians? Do you see any recurring themes? What patterns do you observe about the working of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit? Are certain aspects of salvation associated with particular divine persons? How do the divine persons work together in bringing about salvation? What aspects of salvation does Paul emphasize? How do these emphases connect to the rest of Scripture?
- c. Write:** Based upon the preceding analysis, write a paper (6-8 pages, double spaced, 12 pt. font) summarizing what Ephesians teaches about the trinitarian nature of salvation. This is not a verse by verse commentary on Ephesians but a synthesis of the teaching of Ephesians regarding the relationship between Trinity and salvation. You will need to make a decision about how to *structure* your paper as you write. One simple way to structure your paper would be to organize your presentation in the following way: (a) Father in salvation, (b) Son in salvation, (c) Holy Spirit in salvation, (d) unity and distinction of the divine persons in salvation. In the last page or two of your paper, address the following questions for personal application: What was the most helpful thing you learned about the trinitarian nature of salvation from your study? What implications does this have for ministry? What implications does your study have for Christian ethics? Be sure to address the four window-panes of righteousness. **DUE: Monday, June 1 midnight eastern time (submit to Canvas)**

Course Grade

In Cru, we talk about the five “E’s” of development: education, experience, exposure, environment and evaluation. Evaluation, the fifth E, plays an important role in our growth. Because this is a graduate level course, you will receive a letter grade.

Reading Report	15%
Reading Reflection	10%
Case Studies	25%
Daily Journal	10%
Theology Project	<u>40%</u>
	100%

Grading Scale

94-100	A	82-83	B-	65-71	D
92-93	A-	80-81	C+	0-65	F
90-91	B+	74-79	C		
84-89	B	72-73	C-		

Note: A grade of C- or better is required to apply this course toward your IBS requirements

Students with Learning Issues

If you have a learning issue that affects your participation in the class, please talk with me so we can help you as you engage with the learning tasks in the course.

Course Schedule and Assignments

NOTE: Given the compressed nature of this course, it is important to complete the reading prior to the first session. We will be discussing *Prodigal God* in class each day so you can wait till class to read that. Readings with *** will be discussed in class. Readings mark “lecture notes” will be in the structured notes you receive.

Date	Topic	Reading Due
Monday May 18	Intro to the Practice of Theology	“Ten Things You Should Know about Systematic Theology” Swain [1p, online] HG introduction [4pp]
	Three Kinds of Doctrines: Convictions, Persuasions and Opinions	González, <i>Mañana</i> , [10pp online] PG intro and parable [9pp]
Tuesday May 19	Theology is More Than Beliefs: Introducing Christian Ethics	PG ch1 [10pp]*** Hoang/Johnson, <i>Justice Calling</i> [28pp]
	Creation: God Made All Things	Ellis, “Biblical Righteousness” [2pp, online] HG ch3 [12pp]
Wednesday May 20	Creation: Made in the Image of God	HG ch4 [12pp] Wills, <i>MLK and the Image of God</i> [24pp, online]*** Watch Jemar Tisby on “Race and Image of God” [8 min, online]
	Creation: Ethnicity and Race	“A Letter to My Brothers” [2pp online] “An Apology to Beth Moore” [2pp online] “Cru Statement on Oneness and Diversity” “Understanding the Complementarian/Egalitarian Debate” “Men and Women in Ministry Together” [total 9pp, lecture notes]
Thursday May 21	The Fall: Corruption of Humanity	PG ch2 [12pp]*** HG ch5 [17pp]
	Navigating LGBT+ Questions	“Leading in a Complex Moral Environment” [13pp, lecture notes] “Navigating Transgender Questions” [14pp, lecture notes]

Course Schedule and Assignments (continued)

Date	Topic	Reading Due
Friday May 22	Trinity and Salvation	PG ch3 [20pp]*** Reeves, <i>Delighting in the Trinity</i> [22pp, online]
	Who is Jesus Christ?	HG ch6 [13pp]
Monday May 25 (Memorial Day)	What Did Jesus Do To Save Us?	PG ch4 [25pp]*** HG ch7, ch8 [30pp]
Tuesday May 26	God Chose Us: Election	PG ch5 [17pp]*** HG ch10 [14pp]
	God's Work in Salvation: Calling and Regeneration	Pei, <i>Minority Experience</i> [32pp, online]
Wednesday May 27	Our Response to God's Initiative: Conversion	PG ch6 [15pp]*** HG ch11, ch12 [30pp]
	Justification by Faith	Georges, "Talking about Faith in Non-Western Contexts" Georges [2pp, online] Case Studies due
Thursday May 28	Assurance and Sanctification	PG ch7 [29pp]*** HG ch13, ch14 [27pp]
	Can You Lose Your Salvation?	
Friday May 29	What is the Gospel?	Mason, "How Big is the Gospel?" <i>Woke Church</i> [20pp, online] Keller, "Biblical Contextualization" [9pp]***
	Contextualizing the Gospel	Submit reading report Reading Reflection due
		TOTAL READING = 486pp