

# God, Bible, Holy Spirit

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Institute of Biblical Studies

Prerecorded Virtual Course

## Organizational Purpose

The Institute of Biblical Studies exists in order 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 addresses three core areas of Christian doctrine that are foundational to our life and mission.

## Course Description

In his classic book, *The Knowledge of the Holy*, A. W. Tozer explains, “What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us. . . . For this reason, the gravest question before the Church is always God himself, and the portentous fact about any man is not what he may at a given time say or do but what he in his deep heart conceives God to be like.” This course offers an opportunity to broaden and deepen your understanding of the God whom we love and worship.

To this end, we will explore Christian teaching regarding the nature and attributes of God, the persons of the Trinity, the inspiration and authority of Scripture, and the person and work of the Holy Spirit. You will better understand how one God has revealed himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. You will gain greater confidence in Scripture as the inspired, truthful, authoritative, sufficient, and powerful Word of God. You will discover how the Holy Spirit enables you to grow in conformity to the image of Christ and empowers God’s people to bear witness about Christ to the ends of the earth. We will examine these doctrines as they are taught in Scripture and confessed by the church so that we may better live to the glory of the triune God (2 IBS credits – Theology and Apologetics).

## Learning Outcomes

Affective (attitudes, motivation, character)

1. Deepen your motivation to know, love, and worship the triune God and reflect God’s character as image-bearers.
2. Gain greater confidence in Scripture as the inspired, truthful, authoritative, sufficient, and powerful Word of God.
3. Grow as a disciple of Jesus who joyfully submits to the authority of God’s Word and who builds movements of disciples who “truly follow Jesus” by embracing his Word in their lives.

### Cognitive (knowledge and thinking skills)

1. Deepen your understanding of the nature and attributes of God, the persons of the Trinity, the inspiration and authority of Scripture, and the person and work of the Holy Spirit as these doctrines are taught in Scripture and confessed by the church.
2. Become more familiar with viewpoints, differences, and conflicts that exist among Christians regarding these doctrines as well as the way culture shapes our theologies.
3. Develop a deeper understanding of and commitment to the Cru Statement of Faith.
4. Become persuaded that Christian theology is not merely about right beliefs (orthodoxy) but also right living (orthopraxy).

### Behavioral (personal and ministry skills)

1. Grow in your capacity to read Scripture “theologically.”
2. Grow in your capacity to teach these foundational doctrines from Scripture and relate them to evangelism, discipleship, movement-launching, ethics, and cross-cultural mission.
3. Be better prepared to partner with those who hold differing theological views allowing for differences 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).

### **Required Texts**

Allison Gregg, *God Gift and Guide Knowing the Holy Spirit*. (B&H Publishing Group, 2023). ISBN-13: 978-1087766850

Cooper Barry, *Can I Really Trust the Bible? And Other Questions About Scripture, Truth and How God Speaks*. (Good Book Company 2014). ISBN-13:978-1909559134

Irenaeus, *The Demonstration of Apostolic Preaching*. Trans. John Behr (St. Vladimir’s, 1997). ISBN-13: 978-0881411744 (Other translations are acceptable. This one is just easier to read.)

Tozer AW, *Knowledge of the Holy: The Attributes of God*. (many editions of this book exist, any are acceptable).

### **Additional Readings (Posted Online)**

Cru, [Statement of Faith](#)

Alan Scholes, “Doctrinal Convictions and Persuasions,” in *Principles of Leadership: What We Can Learn from the Life and Ministry of Bill Bright* (Orlando: New Life, 2001), chapter 24.

Thomas F. Torrance. “The Reconciliation of the Mind” in *Atonement* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2009), 437-447.

## Learning Tasks

1. **Reading:** Your reading should be done thoroughly and thoughtfully with a sincere attempt to learn all you can. **Reading Report DUE: On the last day of class.** (To determine the percentage of reading you completed, divide the number of pages you completed by the total number of required pages and convert it to a percentage. Example: Joe Staff completed 400 pages of required reading.  $400 \div 476 = 0.84 \times 100 = 84\%$ .)
2. **Lecture Worksheet:** You will be answering the questions discussed in the lecture on a worksheet as you go throughout the course. The video lectures will alert you as to when to answer a question. Worksheet found [here](#) **DUE: End of module 10.**
3. **Discussion Posts:** 10 posts and responses worth 2 points each. Each initial post should be 150-300 words. After you have posted on a topic, you should respond to at least 2 other students' posts. **DUE: Weekly with each module**
4. **Response and Imitation Worksheet:** As image-bearers (Gen. 1:27-28), we were created to reflect the triune God. You will complete a worksheet that will help you consider how we should respond to and reflect on God's attributes. Instructions are posted [here](#). **DUE: End of module 6**
5. **Theology Project:** You will write a paper in which you present Scriptural teaching on the Trinity. The goal is to be as comprehensive as you can be, exposing the richness of the Bible's own teaching on the Trinity. In order to write this paper, you will need to take the following steps:
  - a) **Choose:** Pick one of the following options:
    - Doctrine of the Trinity as taught in the book of John
    - Doctrine of the Trinity as taught in the book of Ephesians
    - Doctrine of the Trinity as taught in the book of 1 Corinthians
    - Doctrine of the Trinity as taught in the books of 1, 2, 3, John
  - b) **Explore:** Read through the whole book noting every reference to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. For each reference, record your observations. Here are some questions you might consider: What do you learn from this passage about the eternal relations of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit? What do you learn about the work of the Trinity and the inseparable operations of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit? Does the passage say anything about the relationship between the Trinity and the church? You may find it helpful to see what commentators say about your passage (e.g., ESV Study Bible notes).
  - c) **Synthesize:** What stands out to you regarding the Trinity in this book? Do you see any recurring themes? What patterns do you observe about the working of the Triune God? Are certain aspects of his eternal being explained in this book? Are certain aspects of the inseparable operations of the persons of the Trinity in this book in reference to creation or salvation? Consider how best to organize these teachings into a systematic and coherent whole.

- d) **Write:** Drawing your work together, write a paper (7-9 pages, double spaced, 12 pt. font) summarizing what you learned. Remember that this is NOT a verse-by-verse commentary but a carefully crafted summary of the doctrinal teaching of your book on the Trinity. You will need to think about how best to structure your presentation. One simple way to structure your essay would be in terms of (1) teaching on the eternal relations of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and (2) teaching on the work/inseparable operations of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. On the last two pages of your paper, address the following questions: What was the most helpful thing you learned about the Trinity from your study? What implications does this have for the mission and ministry of the church? What implications does your study have for the mission of God? Look for links between the Trinity and missional proclamation in your book drawing on our discussion on the last day of class. **DUE: On the last day of class.**

### 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. Along with that, we will give you feedback on what you did well and where you can grow.

Reading Report	10% (due last day of class)
Lecture Worksheet	20% (due end of module 10)
Discussion Posts	20% (due end of each module)
Response and Imitation	15% (due end of module 6)
Theology Project	<u>35%</u> (due last day of class)
	100%

### Grading Scale

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

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 the TA, so we can help you as you engage with the learning tasks in the course.

## Course Schedule

**Note:** Some sections of the course have a greater amount of reading associated with them. To help, we've tried to spread out some of the reading (especially Allison's book on the Holy Spirit). As a result, you may read on some topics before they are discussed in the class.

Module	Topic	Reading Due	Project Due	Scripture Reading*
1	<b>Theology</b>	Tozer, Ch 1-3, 5-6 (29pp) Scholes, "Doctrinal Convictions and Persuasions" (12pp) Allison, prayer and Ch 1 (5pp)	Discussion Post	Eph 4:1-17
2	<b>Knowing God</b>	Tozer, Ch 7-10 (21pp) Torrance "Reconciliation of the Mind"(11pp) Allison, Ch 2 (5pp)	Discussion Post	John 17
3	<b>Revelation</b>	Tozer, Ch 11-14 (19pp) Allison, Ch 5-7 (26pp)	Discussion Post	John 14:8-11 1 Cor 2:6-16
4	<b>The Doctrine of the Trinity</b>	Tozer, Ch 4, 15-19 (27pp) Allison, Ch 3 (12pp)	Discussion Post	Matthew 28:18-20 1 John 4:7-16
5	<b>Trinity: One Being, Three Persons</b>	The Nicene Creed (1pp) Tozer, Ch 20-22 (17pp) Allison, Ch 4, 8 (32pp)	Discussion Post	Matthew 3:13-17 John 3
6	<b>Trinity: Inseparable Operations</b>	Allison, Ch 10-12 (22pp) Irenaeus, Intro (19pp)	Response & Imitation Worksheet, Discussion Post	John 1 Genesis 1
7	<b>The Bible</b>	Cooper, Intro, Ch 1-2 (32pp) Irenaeus, Part 1 (34pp)	Discussion Post	2 Peter 1:12-21 2 Tim 3:14-17
8	<b>Interpreting the Bible</b>	Cooper, Ch 3-4 (30pp) Irenaeus, Part 2 (34pp)	Discussion Post	Luke 24:13-49
9	<b>The Holy Spirit: Pentecost and Pentecostalism</b>	Cooper, Ch 5 (14pp) Allison, Ch 13-15 (34pp)	Discussion Post	Acts 2
10	<b>The Holy Spirit: Mission and Ministry of the Church</b>	Allison, Ch 16-18 (40pp)	Discussion Post, Lecture Worksheet	Eph 4:1-17 1 Cor 1:18-2:5
Total reading = 476pp				
<b>Due at end of class:</b> Theology Project & Reading Report				

\*Dr. Thorton starts every module with scripture reading. The passages that will be read are noted.