

Humanity, Christ, Salvation

J. Raymond Albrektson, Th.D, Course Instructor

Course Description: *Explores the Biblical foundation of the nature and fall of humanity, the reintroduction of a Second Adam in the person of Jesus, and the plan of God implemented to redeem humankind from alienation to a glorious future. The course will be taught in an experimental online-seminar style focusing on apologetics and ethics by means of discussion, analysis, and application to changing modern worldviews.*

Class Objectives: By the end of this class you should be able to:

- Summarize and critique the various viewpoints on the origin of humanity and distinguish the special characteristics of what makes humans different from all other created beings.
- Evaluate the significance of such human-centric traits as language, consciousness, mind, the conscience, a shared moral vision, and the creation of culture in light of what is revealed by the incarnation of Jesus.
- Outline the limitations of the incarnate Jesus in contrast with the Son as he existed eternally in the Trinity, recognizing that none of those limitations indicate that the incarnate Jesus was any less fully God while also demonstrating full humanity.
- Critique the various errors under which the early church struggled in an attempt to present an embodied Jesus who was both Man and God and be able to recognize the modern counterparts of those errors today.
- Present an overview of the process of salvation from both God's eternal perspective (outside of time) as well as how that process appears to us as it is embedded in history as it unfolds to a conclusion.
- Acquire an awareness of the growing gulf between the Christian view of mankind and the view held by our increasingly secular culture and be able to discuss these topics in an apologetic mode, able to present and defend the biblical position on Humanity, Christ, and Salvation.

I. Required Texts: *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* by Wayne A. Grudem. The Kindle version may be used, and only Parts 3-5 will be read for this course (chapters 21-43)

Course Location and class schedule: The class will meet from 8-10 Pacific time via a web-placed platform, such as Zoom or Hangouts.

Reading Schedule: Because of the concentrated nature of this course, and the seminar style of discussion, it is important that all reading be done prior to the first day. At a bare minimum, the day's reading must be completed prior to the start of class and will be assessed in a brief quiz on the reading each morning. On-time reading will count for 20% of the grade, as assessed by a brief quiz, and 15% of the grade will be based on student interaction (or at least preparedness for interaction).

Day	Discussion Topic(s)	Apologetic emphasis	Ethics Emphasis	Reading
Monday	Mankind: Origin, Nature, Origins of Morality, Nature of Innocence	Evolution, creation, origin of universe, life, & consciousness	Source of moral values: intimate connection with heart of God	Grudem, Chapters 21-23
Tuesday	Mankind: Fall, Moral ability post-Fall, Human Potential	Moral argument for God; absolute ethics demands theistic foundation	Role of conscience & law in moral decision-making	Grudem, Chapters 24-25
Wednesday	Christology: Dual Natures; Complete Humanity & Complete Divinity; Relation to Holy Spirit; Divine Attributes Expressed or Unexpressed;	Why Jesus did no miracles prior to His baptism; significance of baptism, apologetics and miracles	Jesus' ethical foundation	Grudem, Chapters 26-30
Thursday	Soteriology: Eternal plan; Election & Predestination properly understood; Meaning & purpose of Atonement, Identification, Resurrection, & Ascension	Defense of moral freedom, implications for election & predestination; justice of God defended	Christian ethics rooted in regenerate nature; intimate link with heart of God restored but imperfect	Grudem, Chapters 31-35
Friday	Soteriology: Calling, Repentance, Regeneration, Man's role/God's role, Holy living, eternal destiny	Defense of God's sovereignty; vision of eternal future	Moral implications of restored moral link plus access to God's revealed will	Grudem, Chapters 35-37

Assignments and Exam:

At the conclusion of this course, each student will write a brief paper (5-7 page, double-spaced) that addresses one these questions. Other themes may be chosen according to the student's interest with permission of the instructor. This paper will count 40% of the grade.

- How does the incarnate Jesus (the one we meet in the Gospels) inform our understanding of our own human nature, especially with respect to ethics, personal development, source of spiritual power to live the Christian life, and eternal destiny?

- How does the pre-incarnate, incarnate, and resurrected Christ hint at our future nature and destiny?
- What was the significance of Christ's baptism by John in contrast to John's baptism of the multitudes who responded to his message? How does that relate to Christian baptism and the "Baptism of the Holy Spirit" as seen in Acts 2, 8, and 10?
- How is it possible that a genuinely sovereign God can leave room for free will, despite the reality of election and predestination, and who is ultimately responsible for conversion?
- What is the ultimate nature of the eternal, non-physical aspect of human nature, and defend the role of the omniscience of God in assuring our continual existence?

Grading:

Reading quiz: 20%
Readiness for participation: 15%
Theological synthesis paper: 40%
Final exam: 25%

About Dr. Albrektson: Ray was born in Kentucky, earned his B.Sc. at Duke University, and served as a radar and electronics officer in the U.S.A.F. He's been on CCC staff since 1974 and earned the M. Div. from International School of Theology and his Th. D. from the Asian Baptist Graduate Theological Seminary (while concurrently helping to plant and teach at ISOT-Asia). He taught New Testament and Church History courses at ISOT from 1986-2002. He was recognized as a "Google Scholar" in computer-mediated distance education for the first and most-cited publication in that field. He is currently a "Professor-at-Large" for the International Schools of Theology Consortium and concentrates on promoting theological education to Christian workers in the developing world. He's married, has two grown children and three grandchildren. He's the author of several books, a scuba diver, an ex-hang-glider pilot, and competed on *Jeopardy*. You can email him at ray.albrektson@cru.org.