

**God, Bible, and the Holy Spirit**  
INSTITUTE OF BIBLICAL STUDIES  
Summer 2020

Zoom Course (June 15-26)

Onalee J. Pierce, Ph.D.

Email: opierce@ashland.edu and Phone: (614) 440-1657

## **I. 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)

## **II. Learning Outcomes**

### **A. 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.

### **B. 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 which 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).

### C. 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 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).

## III. Course Requirements

### A. Textbooks and Other Materials

#### 1. Required Texts

Allison, Gregg R. *50 Core Truths of the Christian Life: A Guide to Understanding and Teaching Theology*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2018. (ISBN-13: 978-0801019128 and also available for Kindle)

Reeves, Michael. *Delighting in the Trinity: An Introduction to the Christian Faith*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2012. (ISBN-13: 978-0830839834 and also available for Kindle)

Tennent, Timothy C. *Theology in the Context of World Christianity: How the Global Church Is Influencing the Way We Think about and Discuss Theology*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007. (ISBN-13: 978-0310275114 and also available for Kindle)

#### 2. Additional Readings (these articles will be shared via Google Drive)

Ellis, Carl. “Biblical Righteousness Is a Four-Paned Window.” The Gospel Coalition (August 22, 2018), <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/biblical-righteousness-four-paned-window/> (accessed April 10, 2020)

Evans, James H., Jr. “The Bible: A Text for Outsiders.” In *We Have Been Believers: An African American Systematic Theology*, 37-59. 2nd edition. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2012.

González, Justo L. “The Significance of a Minority Perspective.” In *Mañana: Christian Theology from a Hispanic Perspective*, 21-30. Nashville: Abingdon, 1990.

Johnson, Keith E. “*Imitatio Trinitatis*: How Should We Imitate the Trinity?” *Westminster Theological Journal* 75 (2013): 317-334.

Kaunda, Chammah J, and Isabel Apawo Phiri. 2016. “African Instituted Churches Pneumatology and Gender Justice in the Work of GC Oosthuizen: An African Feminist Pneumatological Perspective.” *Scriptura* 115: 1–12.

Mwoleka, Christopher. “Trinity and Community.” *African Ecclesial Review* 17 (July 1975): 203-206.

Tennent, Timothy C. "A Trinitarian Framework for Missions." In *Invitation to World Missions: A Trinitarian Missiology for the Twenty-First Century*, 74-101. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2010.

Wu, Jackson. "The Doctrine of Scripture and Biblical Contextualization: Inspiration, Authority, Inerrancy, and the Canon." *Themelios* 44.2 (2019): 312-326.

## **B. Assignments for Student Learning**

*Reading (20% total)*: Due to the condensed nature of this course and frequent reference to the reading materials during lecture, the course reading should be completed before the first session. Reading should be done thoroughly and thoughtfully with a sincere attempt to learn all you can. A reading report will be submitted on the last day of the course (in your report be sure to include your name and indicate what percentage of the assigned 483 pages you have read). DUE: Friday, June 26 by 11:59pm.

*Response and Imitation Worksheet (30%)*: 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 God's attributes. Instructions for this assignment will be posted on Google Drive. DUE: Wednesday, June 24 by 11:59 pm.

*Theology Project (50%)*: You will write a paper in which you present Scriptural teaching on the person and work of the Holy Spirit. The goal is to be as comprehensive as you can be, exposing the richness of the Bible's own teaching on the Holy Spirit. In order to write this paper, you will need to take the following steps:

a) **Choose**: Pick one of the following four options:

- Doctrine of the Holy Spirit as taught in the book of Luke
- Doctrine of the Holy Spirit as taught in the book of Acts
- Doctrine of the Holy Spirit as taught in the book of 1 Corinthians
- Doctrine of the Holy Spirit as taught in the book of Galatians

b) **Explore**: Read through the whole book noting every reference to the Holy Spirit. For each reference to the Holy Spirit, record your observations. Here are some questions you might consider: What do you learn from this passage about the person of the Holy Spirit (deity, personally)? What do you learn about the work the Holy Spirit (in the life of Christ, the church, unbelievers, believers)? Does the passage say anything about how the Holy Spirit relates to the Father and/or Son? 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 person and work of the Holy Spirit in this book? Do you see any recurring themes? What patterns do you observe about the working of the Holy Spirit? Are certain aspects of salvation associated with Holy Spirit? How does the Holy Spirit relate to other divine persons? 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, 1-inch margins) 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 person and work of the Holy Spirit. 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 person of the Holy Spirit and the (2) teaching on the work of the Holy Spirit. On the last two pages of your paper, address the following questions: What was the most helpful thing you learned about the Holy Spirit from your study? What implications does this have for ministry? What implications does your study have for Christian ethics? Look for links between the Holy Spirit and ethics in your book drawing on our discussion the last day of class. Be sure to address Dr. Ellis' "four window-panes of righteousness" as you reflect on the ethical implications. DUE: Monday, June 29 by 11:59 pm.

Writing Guidelines: While you are not required to use outside sources, be sure to document any sources you do use (**always include page numbers even for paraphrases**). Any statements taken directly from secondary sources must be enclosed in quotation marks. Biblical references should be documented in parentheses (include book, chapter, verse[s], and translation)

### C. Calculation of Grade

<i>Assignments</i>	<i>Percent of Final Grade</i>
Reading	20%
Response and Imitation Worksheet	30%
Theology Project	50%

### IV. Course Schedule

<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Readings</i>
Mon. June 15	Why Does Theology Matter?  Understanding Three Kinds of Doctrines: Convictions, Persuasions, and Opinions	Tennent, ch. 1 (pg. 1-24) and *González, <sup>1</sup> <i>Mañana</i> , ch. 1 (pg. 21-30)  Allison, Introduction (pg. 1-8)
Tue. June 16	How Does God Reveal Himself?  What is God Like? (Incommunicable Attributes)	Reeves, Introduction (pg. 9-18) and Allison, ch. 8 (pg. 65-72)  Allison, ch. 9 (pg. 73-80)
Wed. June 17	What is God Like? (Communicable Attributes)  Our Trinitarian God	Allison, ch. 10 (pg. 81-88)  Reeves, ch. 1 (pg. 19-39)
Thur. June 18	The Trinity and Scripture  The Trinity and Church History	Allison, ch. 11 (pg. 89-95)  Reeves, ch. 2 (pg. 39-62)

<sup>1</sup> All readings with an asterisk (\*) may be found in Google Drive as pdf files.

Fri. June 19	Praying to and Worshipping the Trinity  Trinity and Cross-Cultural Mission	Reeves, ch. 3 (pg. 63-84)  *Tennent, <i>Invitation to World Missions</i> , “A Trinitarian Framework for Missions” (pg. 74-101) and Tennent, ch. 2 (pg. 25-51)
Mon. June 22	Trinity and Christian Ethics  What Does It Mean for God to Be Provident?	*Johnson, “Imitating the Trinity,” pg. 317-334 and *Mwoleka, “Trinity and Community” (pg. 203-206)  Allison, ch. 13 (pg. 103-110)
Tue. June 23	Understanding the Inspiration of Scripture  How Was the Canon Determined?	Allison, ch. 1 (pg. 9-15) and Tennent, ch. 3 (pg. 53-75)  Reeves, ch. 4 (pg. 85-107) and Allison, ch. 7 (pg. 54-61)
Wed. June 24	Clarity and Sufficiency of Scripture  Authority and Truthfulness of Scripture/ Scriptural Authority and Christian Ethics	Allison, ch. 4-6 (pg. 31-53) and *Wu, “The Doctrine of Scripture” (pg. 312-326)  Allison, ch. 2-3 (pg. 16-30) *Evans, <i>We Have Been Believers</i> (pg. 37-59) *Ellis, “Biblical Righteousness”
Thur. June 25	Who Is the Holy Spirit?  What Does the Holy Spirit Do?	Reeves, ch. 5 (pg. 109-128) and Allison, ch. 22 (pg. 179-185)  Allison, ch. 23 (pg. 186-192) and Kaunda and Phiri, “African Instituted Churches Pneumatology,” pg. 1-12
Fri. June 26	Pentecostalism and the Baptism of the Holy Spirit  Filling with the Holy Spirit/ Spirit-Filled Life and Christian Ethics	Tennent, ch. 7 (pg. 163-192)  Allison, ch. 24 (pg. 193-199)

## V. 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, I will give you feedback on what you did well and where you can grow.

### A. Calculation of Grade

<i>Assignments</i>	<i>Percent of Final Grade</i>
Reading	20%
Response and Imitation Worksheet	30%
Theology Project	50%

### B. CRU 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**

### C. Students with Learning Issues

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