AZUSA PACIFIC UNIVERSITY

C. P. Haggard Graduate School of Theology

Jesus Christ, Holy Spirit, and the Church

GTHE 514

Syllabus: Spring 2002

Rev. Don Thorsen, Ph.D.

Azusa, California
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Course Information

Jesus Christ, Holy Spirit, and the Church
GTHE514, 4 Units
Mondays, 8:30 a.m.-12:10 p.m.
Ronald Building, Room 113

Professor

Rev. Don Thorsen, Ph.D.

Course Description

This course introduces students to basic beliefs about Jesus Christ, Holy Spirit, and the church. The doctrines of incarnation, resurrection, atonement, predestination, salvation (including conversion, regeneration, justification, sanctification, and so on), ministry, sacraments, and eschatology are studied from the perspective of historical and systematic theology, based upon a biblical foundation.

Course Outcomes

Students will have the opportunity to:

1. *Develop General Knowledge of Theology*: You—the students—will have the opportunity to develop general knowledge about theology.

2. *Develop Specialized Knowledge of Theology*: You will have the opportunity to develop specialized knowledge about such doctrines as incarnation, resurrection, atonement, predestination, destination, salvation (including conversion, regeneration, justification, sanctification, and so on), ministry, sacraments, and eschatology.
3. **Develop Critical Thinking Skills**: You will have the opportunity to develop critical thinking skills pertaining to theology. This opportunity will especially occur in the process of doing written assignments. (See “Critical Thinking.”)

4. **Develop the Application of Theology**: You will have the opportunity to make practical applications of your theological studies to personal life and ministry. Really!

5. **Develop Attitudes, Values and Beliefs Regarding Change/Stability**: You will have the opportunity to study in ways that challenge your mode of learning and how you relate to those who believe differently from you. (See “Breadth and Depth of Higher Education.”)

**Textbooks**


Oden, Thomas C. *Systematic Theology*. 3 Vols. Rpt.; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1999. This compilation includes the second and third volumes, which we will read in this class:


**Recommended Books**


Assignments

There are three assignments for the course. Each assignment is worth one-third of your final grade.

1. First Position Paper—Choose a Topic: A position paper on any topic related to the subject matter of the course is due Monday, March 4. In the position paper, you should state your thesis and substantiate it in a way that is well argued and documented. You should use scripture, of course, in your paper, but you should also use, at least, two resources, in addition to the readings for the course. (You may use internet resources, however, they may not represent your primary resources.) The position paper should include the following: 1) title page; 2) single-sentence thesis statement that is underlined; 3) notations that follow a recognized format, e.g., the Chicago-style format; and 4) works cited, or bibliography, that only lists those resources used in the position paper. The position paper should also be typed, use not less than a 12-point font, and the text should be no longer than five pages in length. The assignment is worth one-third (33.3%) of your final grade. (Note: For help in writing a position paper, see ‘Structure of an Essay’. If you want help in writing a single-sentence thesis statement, then see the ‘Baker Thesis Machine’.)

2. Second Position Paper—Sanctification: A second position paper on the topic of sanctification is due Monday, April 8. It should follow the same guidelines as those mentioned for the first position paper, including a title page, underlined thesis statement, notations, and works cited or bibliography. The primary resources for your paper will include scripture and assigned readings, particularly Christian Spirituality, edited by Donald Alexander. Issues related to the topic include how one achieves success in sanctification, how much success is possible, and whether a crisis experience following one’s conversion is normal, necessary, or verifiable. You may research other resources, but it is not required for the position paper. The second assignment is worth one-third (33.3%) of your final grade.

3. Final Examination: An in-class, essay examination will be given on Monday, April 29—the final day of class. Approximately seven to ten essay topics for the examination will be distributed in class on Monday, April 8. During the examination, you will be asked to write on three of the essay topics. However, you will not know—until the time of the examination—the essays from which you may choose. The final examination must be hand written, though you need to be sure that your writing is legible. (No computers may be used for writing the essays.) The final examination is worth one-third (33.3%) of your final grade.

Grading

The final grade will be calculated on the following percentages: first position paper (33.3%), second position paper (33.3%), and final examination (33.3%). So, if you receive an A, A-, and
B on the assignments, then you will receive an A- for the final grade; or, if you receive an A, A-, and B- on the assignments, then you will receive a B+ for the final grade. Final grades will be given in accordance with the academic policies of the University. Scholarship is ranked as follows: A, exceptional; B, superior; C, average; D, poor; I, incomplete; F, failure; and W, withdrawal. Pluses and minuses may be given, which have an impact upon the calculation of your overall grade point average (g.p.a.).

**Class Schedule**

**January 7**  
Introduction and Distribution of Syllabi

**January 14**  
Foundations of Theology

- Oden 1: ix-xxi, 527-542 (27)
- Oden 2: vii-xi, 1-12, 469-501 (48)
- Green 6-8 (2)
- Alexander 7-11 (4)

**January 21**  
No Class: Martin Luther King, Jr., Holiday

**January 28**  
Doctrine of Jesus Christ: Introduction to Christology

- Oden 2:1-92 (92)

**February 4**  
Doctrine of Jesus Christ

- Incarnation
- Search for the Historical Jesus

- Oden 2:93-163, 197-228 (101)
- Optional reading—Oden: 164-196 (32)

**February 11**  
Doctrine of Jesus Christ: Life, Death, and Resurrection

- Oden 2: 229-278, 429-526 (146)

**February 25**  
Doctrine of the Atonement

- Oden 2:279-428 (149)

**February 25**  

- Oden 3:15-78 (63)
- Green 11-89 (78)
March 4  
**Doctrine of Salvation**  
- Order of Salvation  
- Predestination and Free Will  
- Repentance, Faith, Justification, and Regeneration

Oden: 3:79-176 (97)

*Due: First Position Paper*

March 11  
**Doctrine of Salvation**  
- Assurance  
- Sanctification  
- Glorification

Oden 3:205-260 (55)  
Green 90-120 (30)  
Alexander: 13-46 (33)

March 18  
**Doctrine of Sanctification: Different Views**

Alexander 47-201 (154)

March 25  
**No Class: Spring Break**

April 1  
**Doctrine of Salvation**  
- Spirituality  
- Holy Spirit Baptism  
- Gifts of the Spirit

Oden 3:177-204 (27)  
Green 149-248 (99)

April 8  
**Doctrine of the Church: Nature of the Church**

Oden 3:261-303 (42)  
Green 121-148 (27)

*Due: Second Position Paper—Sanctification*

*Distribution: Final Examination Essay Topics*

April 15  
**Doctrine of the Church: Work of the Church**

Oden 3:303-368 (65); Review 3:274-277 (3)
April 22  Doctrine of Eschatology

Oden 3:369-468 (99)

April 29  Final Examination

Comments

Speak Up!: Please do not hesitate to ask questions or make observations in class. This course is designed with the intent of stimulating faculty and student interaction. Learning, integration of the subject matter, and its application toward life and ministry occur best when done in a context open to dialogue.

Readings: Assigned readings are mandatory and should be completed in advance of the classes for which they are scheduled in the syllabus. (Note: The largest reading assignments occur during the middle of the semester.) Knowledge of the readings will be critical for understanding the lectures and subsequent discussions, and for preparing for the final examination.

Quality of Writing: Written assignments should be undertaken as though you were preparing them for publication, even if for publication in your church. This discipline should help to improve the quality of your writing. Emphasis in this class will always be placed on the quality rather than the quantity of your work. I appreciate and reward good and lucid writing, and I deprecate and downgrade poor and obscure writing. It is a matter of communication. Clarity and precision of language make communication easier and understanding more pleasurable. I want to enjoy reading what you write!

Formal Style of Writing: All assignments should be typed and written in a formal style, for example, no contractions or excessive use of slang. The position papers should include a title page, notations (Chicago-style footnotes, endnotes, or parenthetical notations), and a bibliography or works cited that follow a consistent format for bibliographical references, namely, as found in Turabian’s *A Manual for Writers*. (See the recommended books.)

Inclusive Language: For the sake of communication, I require that you use inclusive language in all written assignments. By “inclusive” I mean the use of generic terms with reference to both men and women. For example, there are many substitutes which may be used in the generic sense for the words “men,” “man,” “mankind,” and other words that increasingly have more of a male connotation. Among these are: humanity, humankind, human beings, humans, persons, people, all, and everyone. Inclusive language is primarily a matter of clarity. Generic terms (e.g., humanity, people) used along with gender specific terms (e.g., men, women) are more precise. There are other reasons for using inclusive language, not the least of which are theological and ethical. For further information, see Sherlock, *Doctrine of Humanity*, pp. 239-246, or Don Thorsen and Vickie Becker, *Inclusive Language Handbook*. 

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**Identifying Numbers:** On all assignments you will be asked to write the last four digits of your social security number rather than your name in order to identify your work. The use of identifying numbers enhances objectivity in grading and makes for easy distribution of sensitive evaluated material without embarrassment to you. It also makes it possible for you to examine the grade book at any time without observing the grades of others. My records are kept according to the last four digits of your social security number until the end of the semester.

**Completion of Work:** All assignments must be completed in order to pass the course. Extended due dates will be granted only in cases of hardship such as hospitalization or emergency absence from class. Unless such a situation arises immediately before a deadline, arrangements cannot be made after the fact without receiving a reduction in your grade. A similar policy applies with regard to course incompletes.

**Cheating Policy:** Cheating on examinations or plagiarism on written assignments will not be tolerated. For example, anyone who plagiarizes (i.e., presents as one’s own work something which has been taken from someone else) may receive an automatic failure on that piece of work and a warning. (Plagiarism can involve the taking of an idea or structure of a written work as well as the actual copying of what is written.) A second like offense will result in failure (“F”) for the final course grade.

**Assignment Return Policy:** Assignments submitted in class will be graded and then returned in class. Assignments completed at the end of a semester will be placed in the office of the Graduate School of Theology at the University. No assignments will be mailed to students unless a self-addressed, stamped envelope is provided to the professor.

**Students with Disabilities:** Any students in this course who have a disability that might prevent them from fully demonstrating their abilities should inform the professor and arrange to meet with an advisor in the Learning Enrichment Center (LEC) as soon as possible. At the LEC, students need to initiate disability verification and discuss accommodations that may be necessary to ensure their full participation in the successful completion of course requirements. (The LEC does not provide assessment for students who have a suspected learning disability. Students are required to obtain this information from an outside source such as a licensed psychologist or qualified educational therapist.)

**Office:** My office is in Room 116 of the Ronald Center for Theology (RCT-116). Please feel free to stop by my office or make an appointment to meet with me even if it is just to become acquainted. I am interested in getting to know you personally as well as teaching the class.

**Office Communication**
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- E-mail: dthorsen@apu.edu
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- 13619 Anochecer Avenue
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Critical Thinking
Breadth and Depth of Higher Education
Structure of an Essay (Paper)

By David Esselstrom and Don Thorsen

I. Introduction
   A. Your task: Respond to the directions of the assignment or question asked, or begin with comments that grab the attention of your reader. Then develop a thesis and defend the reasonableness of that thesis through reference to the reading itself and with collaborating illustrations from other sources or from your personal experience.
   B. Be specific: Always be specific and concrete. Refer to ideas or illustrations in the reading directly, using direct or indirect quotes coupled with enough explanation to defend your understanding of what the author is saying. Use specific incidents or situations from your personal experience as supporting evidence or from the experience of others.

II. Structure
   A. How to accomplish your task: Structure your essay into an introduction, body, and conclusion.
   B. Make sure each section covers the following areas:
      1. Introduction
         a. Demonstrate that you understand the reading and question/assertion; perhaps begin with a story or comments that grab the attention of your readers.
         b. State your thesis in a short declarative statement as clearly and completely as possible.
         c. Indicate the sub-points or supporting ideas you will cover in the body of your essay.
      2. Body
         a. Develop each sub-point or supporting idea separately.
         b. Link sub-points to reading through the inclusion of specific examples from the reading.
         c. Use personal experience to illustrate each sub-point.
      3. Conclusion
         a. Re-emphasize the thesis.
         b. Demonstrate how your sub-points or supporting ideas prove your thesis.
         c. Make sure your closing statement relates to the rest of the essay.
   C. Proportions of the whole: Introduction (1/5-1/6); Body (3/5-2/3); and Conclusion (1/5-1/6). Note: Longer essays/papers will have a proportionately longer Body.
Baker Thesis Machine

By Sheridan Baker

I. FOCUSING: THESIS SENTENCES

A. What is a thesis?

The term thesis comes from the Greek word for "putting" or "position." A thesis simply gives your position on whatever issue you are discussing.

B. What does a thesis do?

In the prewriting stage, a strong thesis can help you focus and develop your own perspective on the issue. As you write, the thesis can serve to keep you "on topic." When you have finished an essay, the thesis acts as a "cue" to guide your reader's interpretation of the paper.

C. Does all writing require a thesis?

No. You need to have a purpose in any piece of writing, but sometimes this purpose will not require you to take a strong position on your topic. A simple description, for example, might not require that you take a position regarding whatever you are describing.

But most of the writing you will do in college—everything from argumentative papers to research projects—requires that you take a definite position on an issue. You will therefore want to be able to express your position in a clear thesis sentence.

D. How is a thesis created?

It depends. If you are writing a take-home paper, your thesis should probably be developed in a tentative and gradual manner—it should be allowed to evolve along with the paper itself. A good writing process involves change: your understanding of the issue should be more profound at the end of your writing process than it was at the beginning. Start out with a rough provisional thesis and gradually refine this initial position as you work through the various drafts of your paper.

But sometimes, especially in in-class writing, you simply do not have time to let your thesis evolve in this gradual fashion. You need to have a controlling idea right from

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the start, even before you begin writing, and you do not have the opportunity to make substantial changes in this thesis. In such situations, the following procedure, one that is admittedly mechanical, may be used to develop a workable thesis quickly on any issue.

II.  THESIS MACHINE

**Step 1: TOPIC**—State the topic under consideration.

a. cats
b. freshman composition
c. grades

**Step 2: ISSUE**—State the specific issue in the form of a debating proposition.

a. Be it resolved: Cats should be subject to leash laws.
b. Be it resolved: Freshman composition should be abolished.
c. Be it resolved: Grades are unnecessary in college.

**Step 3: POSITION**—State you position on the issue as a simple "yes" or "no" sentence.

a. Yes, cats should be subject to leash laws.
b. No, freshman composition should not be abolished.
c. Yes, grades are unnecessary in college.

**Step 4: RATIONALE (because-clause)**—Using a "because-clause," provide a main rationale for your position.

a. Cats should be subject to leash laws because they are inveterate wanderers.
b. Freshman composition should not be abolished because many freshmen are unpracticed writers.
c. Grades are unnecessary in college because students learn more rapidly without them.

**Step 5: QUALIFICATION (although-clause)**—Qualify your thesis by using an "although-clause" to concede points that you do not wish to dispute.
a. **Although** cats do not present as many problems as dogs, they should be subject to leash laws because they are inveterate wanderers.

b. **Although** some students may not require help with their writing, freshman composition should not be abolished because many freshmen are unpracticed writers.

c. **Although** a student's work needs to be evaluated in some fashion, grades are unnecessary in college because students learn more rapidly without them.

**Step 6: REVISE and POLISH**—Make whatever changes you wish to improve the tone and precision of your thesis statement; in particular, consider dropping direct use of "because" and "although."

a. Even though cats are less messy than dogs, the crowded nature of city life demands that the cat's instinctive wanderlust be restrained.

b. Although gifted high school graduates should be permitted to test out of freshman composition, most entering students need help in attaining college writing skills.

c. While there may be a legitimate need to evaluate the work of college students, the traditional grading system hinders learning and stifles creativity.

**Step 7: (Optional) REVERSE and TEST**—Test the soundness of your thesis and expose potential counter-arguments by reversing your position.

a. The cat's independent and adaptable nature makes it the only pet capable of living an unrestricted existence within the city.

b. Although introductory composition may have remedial value for some students, most high school graduates possess writing skills sufficient for success in college courses.

c. Traditional grading procedures may offend educational purists, but public school systems require pragmatic approaches to evaluation.
Writing Effective Essay Examinations

1. Use specific details and well-supported ideas to answer exam questions.
2. Avoid reference to irrelevant details or side comments.
3. Write your answers in complete, well-constructed sentences and unified paragraphs.
4. Proofread your answers for errors in spelling and grammar.
5. Work at a pace that is appropriate to the amount of time you have to complete the exam.
Nicene Creed

I believe in one God, the Father almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth,
And of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only-begotten son of God, Begotten of His Father before all worlds,
God of God,
Light of Light,
Very God of very God,
Begotten, not made,
Being of one substance with the Father,
By Whom all things were made;
Who, for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven,
And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary,
And was made man;
And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered and was buried; and the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures;
And ascended into heaven,
And sitteth on the right hand of the Father;
And He shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead;
Whose kingdom shall have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Ghost,
The Lord and Giver of Life,
Who proceedeth from the Father and the Son,
Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified,
Who spake by the Prophets.
And I believe one holy Christian and Apostolic Church.
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins;
And I look for the Resurrection of the Dead;
And the Life of the world to come.
Amen.

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Apostles’ Creed

I believe in God, the Father, almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born to the Virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried.
He descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.

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Azusa Pacific University

Statement of Faith

We believe the Bible to be the inspired, the only infallible, authoritative Word of God.

We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

We believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in His personal return to power and glory.

We believe in the fall and consequent total moral depravity of humanity, resulting in our exceeding sinfulness and lost estate and necessitating our regeneration by the Holy Spirit.

We believe in the present and continuing ministry of sanctification by the Holy Spirit by whose infilling the believing Christian is cleansed and empowered for a life of holiness and service.

We believe in the resurrection of the saved and the lost: those who are saved to the resurrection of life and those who are lost to the resurrection of damnation.

We believe in the spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ.

The following are fundamentals held to be essential and the university expects students and staff not only to believe in them, but to practice them in daily living:

* Caring, effective love both to God and humanity
* A Christlike unity and acceptance between believers
* A life style dedicated to God's will in society
* A growing, victorious state of mind because of the indwelling Christ
* A daily affirmation of Christ as Lord
* A willingness to serve the Lord, even if it means sacrifice
* A desire to be more sensitive to the personal work of the Holy Spirit
* A working faith in God's promises for all needs and daily life situations
* A witness for Christ without hypocrisy
* A firm committed desire to be God’s person

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## Notable Quotes

### Education

**Education**

Education is the fine effect left in us by the things we have forgotten.

Anonymous

### Faith

**Faith**

I do not seek to understand in order that I may believe, but I believe in order that I may understand.

Anselm, *Proslogium* (11th century)

### Faith and Reason

**Faith and Reason**

Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus.

Paul, Philippians 2:5 (1st century)

### Critical Thinking

**Critical Thinking**

The critical power . . . tends to make an intellectual situation of which the creative power can profitably avail itself . . . to make the best ideas prevail.

Matthew Arnold, *The Function of Criticism at the Present Time* (19th century)

### Self-Analysis

**Self-Analysis**

Know thyself.

Inscription in the temple of Delphi (from Plutarch, *Morals*, 7th century BCE)

### Consistency

**Consistency**

A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds, adored by little statesmen and philosophers and divines.

Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Self-Reliance* (19th century)

### Respect

**Respect**

In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; in all things, charity.

Meldenius (17th century)

### Application

**Application**

Theology is like the map . . . if you want to get any further, you must use the map. . . . In other words, theology is practical.

C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (20th century)