**DM 8320 Trinitarian Theology**

**Michael Allen**

**January 27-31, 2020**

**Note hours of class: M 1:00 PM - 6:00 PM; TWR 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM; F 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM**

*Course Description*

C. S. Lewis speaks in “Meditation in a Toolshed” of the difference between “looking at” something and “looking along” something. The triune God is one worthy of “looking at” in contemplation and study, meditation and prayer. And the God of the Gospel is the only one for whom “looking along” can cast light on all other things. We need to explore and contemplate who God is, and we need to ask what a Trinitarian view of *x*, *y*, and *z* really means. In this course then we will consider ways in which looking at the triune God and looking along the triune God can faithfully and fruitfully be pursued, mindful of classical and contemporary approaches. We will examine key elements of the doctrine of God in their biblical, historical, and theological complexity, seeking not only to contemplate God more fully but to ask how they shape the active lives of Christians in a variety of ways.

*Contact Info*

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*Textbooks*

Per usual DMin requirements, you will read 2000 pages for this course. Approximately 1800 of your 2000 pages will be common texts that are read by all in the class. These nine books are required for everyone:

1. Fred Sanders, *The Deep Things of God*
2. John Owen, *Communion with the Triune God* (the Crossway edition with introduction by Kapic)
3. Patrick Miller, *The God You Have*
4. John Webster, *4* *selected essays distributed as PDFs on Canvas*
5. Kathryn Tanner, *God and Creation in Christian Theology*
6. Stephen Holmes, *The Quest for the Trinity*
7. Gregory Nazianzus, *On God and Christ: The Five Theological Orations*
8. Augustine, *Tractates on the Gospel of John*
9. John Calvin, *Commentary on St. John, Part 1*

A tenth book is also required, and this final required reading (200 pages or more) will be individually selected (related to assignment #2). Students must email the professor to reserve a text from the list (found on the next page of this syllabus under item “2. Reading Report”).

FYI, here are some descriptions of the assigned readings and their contribution to our work together in this class. The goal is for you to read a range of texts. The first four texts show how Trinitarian theology shapes Christian faith and practice more broadly (piety, communion, politics, etc.). The next text addresses problems in modern theology by returning to more classical sources. Holmes’s book surveys the history of the doctrine of the Trinity, especially debunking some modern assumptions about earlier eras. Nazianzus’s text offers perhaps the five most important orations on the subject in the early church. The final pairing help you listen to a richly Trinitarian text (John) with the help of two master-exegetes from the patristic and Reformational eras. Then the final assignment will expose you deeply to one major monograph and update you on a range of others (through student reading reports and briefs).

Note: if you have already read any of the assigned books, you may substitute an additional work from the list below (found under “2. Reading Report”).

*Requirements*

1. Read the assigned texts. Due by the first day of class. You will log the percentage of reading completed in Canvas.
2. Reading Report. Each student will select one additional text from a list provided by the professor. They will read the book and any major scholarly reviews (that is, academic journals, not blogs) available prior to our time in class. They will then prepare a 2-3 page reading brief with which they will update the class on the text (key questions: why was it written? what was it responding to? what sources does it employ? what is its thesis? what sorts of evidence does it highlight? what kind of arguments does it use? what are major objections to its case? what questions does it provoke? what might be implications arising from it? what have significant reviews noted in response?). Students will give brief in-class presentations of their text, updating classmates of its significance in less than 5 minutes.

You may choose from a text that engages in high-level exegetical, historical, or systematic reflection.

Four options engage in contemporary biblical studies:

Matthew Bates, *The Birth of the Trinity*

Wesley Hill, *Paul and the Trinity*

Richard Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*

Kavin Rowe, *Early Narrative Christology*

Five options are historical studies:

Lewis Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy*

Khaled Anatolios, *Retrieving Nicaea*

Paul Gavrilyuk, *The Suffering of the Impassible God*

Gilles Emery, *The Trinitarian Theology of Thomas Aquinas*

William Placher, *The Domestication of Transcendence*

Finally there are nine systematic/constructive options:

Fred Sanders, *The Triune God*

Matthew Levering, *Scripture and Metaphysics*

Christopher Holmes, *The Lord is Good*

Rowan Williams, *Christ, the Heart of Creation*

Scott Swain, *The God of the Gospel*

Fred Sanders and Scott Swain (eds.), *Retrieving Eternal Generation*

James Dolezal, *All That Is in God*

Steve Duby, *Divine Simplicity*

John Webster, *God without Measure*, volume 1: *God and the Works of God*

Requests for assignments will be granted on a first come, first served basis. So inquire via email to the professor asap upon your registration.

1. Write a research paper (between 3000-3500 words) on one key Trinitarian issue and its pastoral significance, engaging with relevant scholarly literature (both contemporary and classical). We will begin to identify, develop, research, and organize resources during our time together in class. Use Turabian format. Due by April 30, 2020.

*Schedule*

We will meet the following times: Monday 1:00 PM – 6:00 PM; Tuesday thru Thursday 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM; Friday 9:00AM – 1:00 PM. Each day we will focus upon a key topic, looking at a biblical passage that has shaped that topic’s development and discussing some of your readings that are relevant.

1. Idolatry and Wholeness – Monotheism: Deuteronomy 6
2. Transcendence and Immanence: Exodus 3
3. Equality and Subordination? John 5
4. Atonement and Divine Attributes (Simplicity, Justice, and Mercy): Romans 3
5. Trinity and Divine Agency: Revelation and Sanctification: Romans 8



**Course Objectives Related to SLOs Chart**

Course: Trinitarian Theology

Professor: Allen

Campus: Orlando

Date: Winter 2020

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| **DMin\* Student Learning Outcomes**  *In order to measure the success of the DMin curriculum, RTS has defined the following as the intended outcomes of the student learning process. Each course contributes to these overall outcomes. This rubric shows the contribution of this course to the DMin outcomes.*  *NOTE: DMin Emphases are:*   1. *Reformed Expository Preaching (REP), and* 2. *Reformed Theology and Ministry (RTM)* | | **Rubric**   * Strong * Moderate * Minimal * None | **Mini-Justification** |
| **Biblical/**  **Theological Foundations:** | Significant knowledge of biblical and theological foundations for pastoral ministry. (This includes interaction with Biblical texts, as well as awareness of Reformed Theology.)  *For meets: REP= Significant*  *For meets: RTM= Significant* | Strong | Explores classical and contemporary theology in its exegetical and dogmatic forms. |
| **Historical/**  **Contemporary Practices:** | Significant knowledge of historical and contemporary practices of pastoral ministry.  *For meets: REP= Minimal*  *For meets: RTM= Significant* | Minimal | Engages with Trinitarian applications in various areas of faith and practice, both good and bad examples. |
| **Integration:** | Ability to reflect upon and integrate theology and practice, as well as implementation in a contemporary pastoral setting. | Moderate | Reflects on how to think in light of the trinity in terms of piety, worship, salvation, and culture. |
| **Sanctification:** | Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids in the student’s sanctification. | Minimal | Engages question of how to relate to a triune God in particular. |
| **Hermeneutical/**  **Homiletical Analysis** | Demonstrates ability to interpret a text and apply homiletical principles to the text.  *For meets: REP= Significant*  *For meets: RTM= Minimal* | Strong | Reviews attempts to read trinitarianly, especially in gospel texts. |