

Point Loma Nazarene University
School of Theology & Christian Ministry
Fall Semester, 2015

Course: CHU 395. The Christian Tradition, Sec.5. Mon-Wed 10:55 a.m. – 12:10 p.m., Liberty Station 201.

Professor: Dr. Michael Lodahl. Office Smee 205; Phones 849-2331 & (858) 405-3184

Texts: Lodahl, Michael and Cordero Masciewicz, April.
Renewal in Love: Living Holy Lives in God's Good Creation (Renewal)
Placher, William. *A History of Christian Theology: An Introduction (HCT)*
Course anthology, *Crucial Readings in the Christian Tradition. (Readings)*

Course Objective:

To introduce students to the leading persons, convictions, practices, institutions and traditions of Christian faith from the end of the New Testament era to the present, with particular attention given to the Wesleyan-Arminian tradition (John Wesley, 1703-1791; Jacob Arminius, 1560-1609).

We shall attempt to focus our historical and theological study through a double lens of *Christology*, or the doctrine of Christ, and *cosmology*, or the doctrine of creation. This means that we shall attempt to keep ever before us the following question: What have selected key people during the 21 centuries of Christian faith *believed, thought, and said*, about Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ (or Messiah, the Anointed One of God)? Further, we shall attempt to discern what practical difference(s) such convictions have made upon those people's lives: what have they *done* in response to, and in light of, their faith in Jesus Christ? Most particularly, how have Christians thought about, and acted within, God's creation – the world in which we live and upon which we depend – in the light of Jesus Christ, God's incarnate Son?

(This course is one of the components of the General Education Program at Point Loma Nazarene University, under the category of "Responding to the Sacred." By including this course in a common educational experience for undergraduates, the faculty supports the study of Scripture and Christian heritage as foundational in the pursuit of knowledge and the development of personal values.)

Course Requirements:

- 1) Consistent class attendance and participation.
- 2) Careful and disciplined reading of assigned texts for each class session. **Actually doing the daily reading is absolutely your responsibility.** This will be evaluated essentially by the quality of discussion/interaction which you are able to contribute to the life of the class.

Course requirements, cont'd.

3) A “semester writing project” which can take any **one** of the three following forms, **A, B** or **C**:

- A) Three “field trip” visits to worship services of one congregation from *each* of the three groups listed below. LET ME REPEAT: ONE VISIT FROM *EACH* OF THE THREE GROUPS LISTED BELOW. If a student, for example, makes two visits to Group 3 churches, only one visit will count; the student will either receive zero credit or else make another visit to an appropriate church.** In response to each of your visits, you will write a brief (but no less than two pages, double-spaced) paper in which you offer your own observations of the worship service; for example, write what you noted about the congregation itself, the style and content of the worship, the use of Scripture or other printed texts, (especially) *what is said about (or to) Christ*, what role art and architecture seem to play in this congregation’s life and worship, the behavior and sermon of the minister, priest or worship leader, etc. These papers can (but need not) build on one another in terms of comparison / contrast, and are due as listed in course calendar. **You must include the church bulletin (or some other corroborating document) from the service you attended, upon which you should have your handwritten notes from the service along with your signature.**
- *Please note that in these papers, your professor is most interested in what you observe theologically—an even more specifically, Christologically, about the service. Most of your energies and attention should focus on what is said or implied about God, or about Christ, in the Scripture reading(s), choruses or hymns that are sung, and the sermon itself. Please do not generalize; be specific in describing what you heard theologically in the worship service. Please be attentive, too, to any references to God as the Creator or to the world around us as God’s good creation. You will be evaluated closely in regards to these criteria regarding A) Christology and B) the doctrine of creation. It is certainly encouraged that you have fun with these papers and find a way to make your professor smile through your engaging writing!*

Congregational worship visit possibilities:

Group 1: Roman Catholic, Orthodox (Greek, Russian, Coptic, Armenian, etc.), Episcopal.

Group 2: Presbyterian, Lutheran, Christian Reformed, United Methodist, United Church of Christ, Congregational Church, Christian Church (Disciples), Church of Jesus Christ, Scientist (Christian Science).

Group 3: Baptist, Friends, Seventh-day Adventist, Assemblies of God, Nazarene, Foursquare, charismatic, Pentecostal, non-denominational congregations, Jehovah’s Witnesses, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormon).

Course Requirements, cont'd

*There may be possibilities other than these listed; however, **please check with your professor before visiting a church congregation not listed above.** In order to gain the richest experience from this assignment, you are requested *not* to count a worship service in your own “home” tradition or denomination as one of your three visits. **Although you may arrange your visits in any order you wish, it might be most useful to your educational process to follow the order of Groups 1-2-3 as outlined above.**

Due dates for these church visit response papers are listed in the Course Calendar. ***Please note that a paper turned in later than classtime on the same day of due date will receive a penalty of 5 points (out of 100). Each day late thereafter will receive a 7 point reduction.***

or option

B) A 6-8 page response / reflection paper on any one of the following books:

John Wesley, *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection*

Daniel Taylor, *The Myth of Certainty:*

The Reflective Christian and the Risk of Commitment

John Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One:*

Ancient Cosmology and the Origins Debate

Elizabeth Johnson, *Consider Jesus: Waves of Renewal in Christology*

Elizabeth Johnson, *Women, Earth, and Creator Spirit*

Terence Fretheim, *Creation Untamed: The Bible, God, and Natural Disasters*

or option

C) A 6-8 page research paper on a topic of your choosing that is relevant to this course, and is approved by your professor. This paper, regardless of topic, will require your consulting / reading from a minimum of six outside sources (not including class text or the Bible) and a minimum of 150 pages read from those sources. You will document the pages read from each of your outside sources as part of your bibliography or works cited page. Failure to do so will result in immediate reduction of paper grade.

The due date for options B and C are listed in the course calendar. Please note that the same grade reductions will hold for these writing options: *a paper turned in later than classtime on the same day will be reduced by 5 points (out of 100), and each day thereafter that the paper is late will reduce the grade by 7 points per day.*

Course Requirements, cont'd

Important Points Regarding Your Writing for this Class

- *Please keep in mind that grammar, spelling and punctuation all play a critical role in your professor's evaluation of all your papers. I mean this. Please avail yourselves of the services of a competent proofreader.*
- **To help you in the endeavor of writing a good paper for this class and other classes, please take seriously the additional Writing Tips document from the professor regarding common errors in student writing. Peruse this document carefully; you shall be held responsible for its contents in your professor's reading of *all* of your assigned papers.**
- **No papers will be accepted after the last class session before finals week; in other words, *no papers or extra-credit work whatsoever will be accepted after the final Thursday class.***
- **The PLNU School of Theology and Christian Ministry is committed to the equality of women and men. Recognizing that people have often used language in ways that imply the exclusion or inferiority of women, the department strongly urges students, faculty and staff to avoid sexist language in public discourse, in classroom discussions and especially in their writings.**

5) Two exams, to be taken as scheduled on course calendar. These exams will be primarily objective in nature (multiple choice, brief fill-in, matching) and will draw significantly from the daily quiz materials. *The final examination will be cumulative.*

Final Grade:

Will be determined on the basis of the two exams (20% on mid-term, 32% on the final), the semester writing project (the three congregational worship visits and response papers are 10% each, while the other two possible projects are 30%), attendance and participation (18%).

All assignments will receive a grade based on the scale below:

93.5 – 100, A; 89.5 – 93.4, A-; 86.5 – 89.4, B+; 82.5 – 86.4, B; 79.5 – 82.4, B-;
76.5 – 79.4, C+; 72.5 – 76.4, C; 69.5 – 72.4, C-; 66.5 – 69.4, D+; 59.5 – 66.4, D;
55.5 – 59.4, D-; below 55.5, F.

Please Note:

- **I generally do offer a number of extra-credit assignments. I do not do these just for the sake of giving students a chance to earn extra points. I do it when I find opportunities for student learning that are relevant to this course. Because I know your time is valuable and you are faced with many choices and pressures concerning your schedule, I offer extra-credit as a stimulus for student attendance and participation for relevant events. *For every extra-credit opportunity, what is required is your attendance of the event, and a summary / reflection / response paper of two to three pages.* All extra-credit points are applied to the “quizzes and participation” category (see above).**
- **While all students are expected to meet the minimum academic standards for completion of this course as established by the instructor, students with disabilities may require academic accommodations. At Point Loma Nazarene University, students requesting academic accommodations must file documentation with the Disability Resource Center (DRC), located in the Bond Academic Center. Once the student files documentation, the Disability Resource Center will contact the student’s instructors and provide written recommendations for reasonable and appropriate accommodations to meet the individual needs of the student. This policy assists the university in its commitment to full compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities (ADA) Act of 1990, and ADA Amendments Act of 2008, all of which prohibit discrimination against students with disabilities and guarantees all qualified students equal access to and benefits of PLNU programs and activities.**
- **Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Please consult the school catalog under the heading of Academic Honesty to learn the professor’s intended policy regarding student dishonesty regarding academic work. It would be a bare minimum that any student caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive a score of zero for the assignment in question; it is also within the professor’s rights simply to fail the student for the course.**

Note: If you choose option 1) of the three semester writing project possibilities, you *must* turn in the first church visit response paper on the due date below or you will receive *no credit* for that particular writing assignment. All other writing assignments that are turned in late will receive the grade reduction detailed earlier.

Course Calendar

September

9 – Introduction to the course. Topic: *Jesus's question: "Who do you say that I am?"*

14 – *HCT* Chapter 1 (Introduction) and Chapter 2 (The Hope of Israel).
Topic: *Jesus Christ, the Full Revelation of God and the Ultimate Paradox of Christian Faith.*

16 – *Renewal* Chapter 1. Topic: *Humanity Created (and Renewed) in the Image of God.*

21 – *Renewal* Chapter 2 (pages 35-44); *HCT* Chapter 3 (The Mission to the Gentiles)
Topic: *Jesus Christ, the Word and 'Very Being' of God*

23 – *HCT* Chapter 4 (The Beginnings of Orthodoxy); *Readings* 4-8 (excerpts from Gospel of Thomas and Ignatius of Antioch). Topic: *The Incarnate Word vs. Gnostic Christologies*

28 – *HCT* Chapter 5 (An Alliance with Philosophy); *Readings* 13-23 (excerpts from Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian and Origen)
Topic: *Faith in Christ and Philosophical Reasoning*

30 – *Renewal*, Chapter 3. Topic: *Reason's Intersection with Reading Scripture.*

October

5 – *HCT* 55-61; *Readings* 23-25 (excerpts from Arius and Athanasius)
Topic: *The Christological Debate at the Council of Nicea*
***First worship visit response paper due at beginning of classtime.**

7 – *HCT* 62-72; *Readings* 26-28 (excerpts from Apollinaris and Gregory of Nazianzus)
Topic: *The Christological Debate at the Council of Constantinople*

12 – Extra credit possibility: Wiley Lecture Series presenter for this year: Ellen Davis, Professor of Old Testament at Duke University School of Divinity. This lecture is scheduled for 1:30 – 2:20 p.m., Crill Auditorium on campus.

12 – *Renewal*, Chapter 4 (69-86).
Topic: *Irenaeus and Gregory as Champions of Jesus's Truly Human Nature*

13 – Extra credit possibilities: Ellen Davis lectures, Crill Auditorium, 9:30 – 10:20 a.m. and again 1:30 – 2:20 p.m.

14 – No class. Extra credit possibility: Final Ellen Davis lecture in the 2015 Wiley Lecture Series, Crill Auditorium, 11 – 11:50 a.m.

19 – *Readings* 30-39

(excerpts from Gregory of Nazianzus, Basil of Caesarea and his older sister Macrina)

Topic: *The Cappadocians' Critical Contributions*

Significant extra-credit possibility: Visit the Timken Art Museum (it's free) at Balboa Park, study the Russian icon exhibit, and write a 1 ½ - 2 page reflection paper on your observations, handed in along with material evidence that you actually were there. Most particularly, please take note of the different ways in which Jesus is depicted through these icons. If you choose to do this, your paper could be worth up to 50 points of extra credit if it is done and handed in between February 16 and February 25 – the period, roughly speaking, when we will be reading about, and discussing, the role of icons in Christian worship. You may fulfill this extra-credit assignment any other time during the semester as well – but for only up to 30 points of extra-credit.

21 – *HCT* Chapter 7 (Light in the East); *Readings* 47-49; *Renewal* Chapter 4 (86-92).

Topic: *Maximus the Confessor and John of Damascus: Orthodox Champions*

26 – *HCT* Chapter 8 (Augustine); *Readings* 40-43

(excerpts from *Confessions* through Book VII). Topic: *The Great Bishop of Hippo*

28 – *Readings* 44-46; *Renewal* 44-49. Topic: *Augustine in Conflict*

November

2 – Mid-term examination.

4 – *HCT* 119-126; *Readings* 50-56.

Topic: *Anselm and Abelard (and Heloise!)*

9 – *HCT* 128-136; *Readings* 57-61. Topic: *Aquinas on Creation and on Christ*

***Second worship visit response paper due at beginning of classtime.**

11 – *Readings* 62-69. Topic: *Julian of Norwich: Mysticism, Christ and Creation*

16 – *HCT* 153-159; *Readings* 69-73. Topic: *Luther vs. Erasmus on Human Willing*

18 – *HCT* 159-169; *Readings* 73-76. Topic: *Luther vs. Zwingli*

23 – *HCT* Chapter 14 (God’s Governance); *Readings* 76-80. Topic: *Calvin and Arminius*

Thanksgiving Break

30 – *HCT* 209-217; *Readings* 82-86. Topic: *John Wesley, Arminian ‘Reasonable Enthusiast’*

December

2 – *Renewal* Chapter 5; *Readings* 86-87. Topic: *Wesley on the Love of God in Jesus Christ*

7 – *Renewal* Chapter 6; *Readings* 88-91. Topic: *Eschatology in a Wesleyan Way.*

****Third worship visit response paper – or semester term paper – due at beginning of classtime.***

9 – *Renewal* Chapter 7 and Postscript (“The Eighth Day”) (135-146).

Topic: *Wesleyan Theology and our Ecological Crisis.*

No written work can be handed in later than this point.

Monday, December 14 – Final Examination, 10:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.