

ECOS 222
**THEOLOGICAL HERITAGE II:
THE EARLY CHURCH
Fall 2021**

Instructor: Mitchell Kennard, PhD | mkennard@smu.edu
Place: North Texas Ministry Center | 500 Maplelawn Dr., Plano, TX 75075
Dates: Sept 18, Oct 16, Nov 13
Time: 8:30 AM – 5:30 PM (with 1 hour for lunch)

This course is designed to introduce students to the Church's systematic reflection on the mysteries of the Christian faith during its first five centuries. Students will learn about the major persons and events of this period and will be expected to critically engage the theological ideas of individual persons as well as the doctrinal decisions made by the Church in its explicit articulation of its understanding of the deposit of faith.

Required Books

Justo L González, *The Story of Christianity*, vol. 1, 2nd ed. (HarperCollins, 2010)
William G Rusch, *The Trinitarian Controversy* (Fortress Press, 1980)
R A Norris, *The Christological Controversy* (Fortress Press, 1980)

Class Sessions

Session 1 (Sept 18): The Word of God and the Triune God

- González, chs. 3-4, 7-9, 17, 19
- Irenaeus of Lyon, *Against Heresies* III.1-11, in ANF, vol. 1, pp. 414-29
- Rusch, *The Trinitarian Controversy* (Fortress, 1980), chs. 2-10

Session 2 (Oct 16): Christ and the Spirit

- González, chs. 28, 20
- Norris, *The Christological Controversy* (Fortress, 1980), chs. 7-9
- Basil of Caesarea, *On the Holy Spirit*, chs. 1-10 (St. Vladimir's, 1980), pp. 15-47

Session 3 (Nov 13): Salvation and the Church

- González, chs. 10, 13, 15-16, 24
- Pelagius, "Letter to Demetrius," in Burns, *Theological Anthropology* (Fortress, 1981)
- Augustine, "On the Spirit and the Letter," in *Answer to the Pelagians I* (NCP, 1997), pp. 150-202
- Augustine, "On Baptism, Against the Donatists," books I-II, in NPNF, vol. 4, pp. 411-35
- Canons 1-8 of the (16th) Council of Carthage (418), DH §§222-230
- Texts of the (2nd) Council of Orange (529), DH §§370-397

Assignments

- 1. Reading Responses:** For each of the three sessions, a 1-2 page (double-spaced) reading response is due to the instructor at 5PM the evening before class. The reading response should focus on one (and only one) of the readings assigned for the week and should include the following: (1) a statement of the thesis of the reading, (2) one point raised by the reading that is of interest to you and an explanation of why it interests you, (3) one question raised by the reading (either something you did not understand, an objection to something you read, a point you wish to discuss during class, etc.). The reading responses will not be graded individually but must all be submitted. Their quality together with the quality of participation in discussion will constitute 30% of the course grade.
- 2. Controversy Paper:** For *one* of the six controversies covered in this course (i.e., Scripture, Trinity, Christ, the Spirit, Salvation, or the Church), submit a 5-7 page paper (double-spaced) presenting the competing position of the various sides of the controversy, the basic motivations behind each position, an explanation of the decision made by the Church, and an account of why the Church decided in the way that it did. For example, if you were to write on the Arian controversy, you would need to explain Arius's position and the *reasons* for his holding this position. You would then need to explain Athanasius's position and the *reasons* for his holding this contrary position. You would then need to explain what the Church decided regarding this controversy at Nicaea and the *reasons* for this decision. The Controversy Paper is to be submitted by email to the instructor by the end of the day, November 9. For each day that the Controversy Paper is late, 5% will be deducted from the paper grade. The Controversy Paper will constitute 50% of the course grade.
- 3. Portraits Paper:** Write a substantive paragraph on each of the following 11 persons or events. Each paragraph should for four or five sentences long and should explain concisely and substantively why this person or event is important in the history of the Christian Church. Writing such portraits is an excellent exercise in sifting large amounts of information for the sake of long-term memory: Athanasius, Cyril of Alexandria, the Cappadocian Fathers, Augustine, Arius, Nestorius, Pelagius, Donatism, Nicaea I, Constantinople I, Chalcedon. The Portraits Paper is to be submitted by email to the instructor by the end of the day, November 16. For each day that the Portraits Paper is late, 5% will be deducted from the paper grade. The Portraits Paper will constitute 20% of the course grade.