

# Introduction to Christian Theology – Online

## Syllabus

Free Methodist Church of North America

Acts 12:24 Churches

Online Extension of the Ministry Education Center of Metro NY/NJ

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## Course # Acts12:24 1007

### Introduction to Christian Theology

#### Attribute/s of Outcome Based Ordination this course addresses

- Demonstrate a Wesleyan theological integration. They know and embrace the history, polity, Articles of religion, and core values of the FMC. They articulate Wesleyan distinctives compellingly, and they understand and embrace a Wesleyan relational theology.

#### Expected Outcomes

- **Cognitive**  
Develop a comprehensive understanding of fundamental Christian Doctrine, Systematic theology and the doctrines of God, Christ, Church, Man, Word of God, Application of redemption, Future.
- **Affective**  
Develop the abilities to apply Christian Doctrine concepts to actual ministry situations (through case analysis).  
  
Develop decision making skills when dealing with incomplete, inaccurate, or unreliable information.
- **Behavioral**  
Develop the verbal and written skills to communicate your understanding of Christian doctrine concepts.  
  
Develop the necessary interactive and team working skills when networking with coworkers and colleagues  
  
Develop skills in interpersonal communication, and the giving and receiving feedback, as you work with your classmates and the instructor to learn about Christian Doctrine.

## General Description:

An Introductory course in systematic theology from an evangelical, Wesleyan perspective that seeks to give students a clear foundation in Christian doctrine to further their personal discipleship and enable them to minister with theological integrity and biblical faithfulness. This course will cover such topics as God, the Bible, Sin, Salvation, the Church, and Eschatology.

## Course Texts:

McGrath, Alister E. Christian Theology: An Introduction. 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary 6th Ed. Hoboken: Wiley Blackwell, 2017.

- ISBN-13: 978-1118869574
- ISBN-10: 1118869575
- The edition of this text is important for this course as the chapter order changed and the lesson structure was adjusted. If you already own an older edition of this text, make sure to use the **chapter titles** instead of **chapter numbers** to guide your assigned readings and responses.

## Grading Scale:

90-100 %- A

80-90 % -B

70-80 % - C

70 % and below – F

## Assignments and grading:

1. Do all assigned readings and submit signed acknowledgement – 10%
2. Personal Reflection Assignments – Much of this course will focus on your personal interactions with the assigned readings ideas. You will submit several 1-3 paragraph reflections throughout this course. The purpose of these assignments is to focus you on engaging the readings for your ministry in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century – 30%
3. Final Paper #1: Write a 4-page paper about Infant Baptism. You have 3 options for this paper based on your current stance: 1- If you agree with infant baptism, articulate the theological position of someone that doesn't. 2- If you do not agree with it, articulate the theological position of someone that does. 3- If you have not developed a position on the issue, explore both sides, 2 pages each. – 30%
4. Final Paper #2: Write a 4-page paper exploring the Kingdom of Heaven. Jesus spoke of the Kingdom of Heaven/God numerous times in the Gospels. He spoke of the Kingdom having come, but also said that it is coming. Explore what The Kingdom of Heaven/God in the Gospels (3 pages) and conclude your paper with 1 page about what it means for your life & ministry that the Kingdom is both here and still coming – 30%

# Assigned Readings before each Class Session:

## **1. What is Theology & Why is it Important?**

- Read the *Key Theologians* section from Christian Theology Chapters 1-3
- Read Christian Theology chapters 4 & 5

**As you read this section, have these questions in mind:**

- What is the definition of Theology?
- What were the main features of the Enlightenment?
- How did the Enlightenment affect Christian theology?
- How is generic Spirituality different from Theology?
- What is “heresy” and is the idea of heresy irrelevant in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century?

## **2. God the Father & The Trinity**

- Read Course Handbook pages 3-38
- Read Christian Theology chapters 7, 9, & 13

**As you read this section, have these questions in mind:**

- Can we know there is a God? How?
- What do you understand the term “revelation” to mean?
- How would you define the Trinity?
- What is dualism?
- If God is good, why is there evil in the world?
- What does it mean to have a “personal relationship” with God?

## **3. Jesus, Sin, & Salvation**

- Read Course Handbook pages 39-75
- Read Christian Theology chapters 10, 11, & 14

**As you read this section, have these questions in mind:**

- What does it mean for Jesus to be “God incarnate”?
- What does it mean for Jesus to be the “mediator” between God and humanity?
- What are the prerequisites for salvation and what does scripture tell us is necessary for it?
- What change actually takes place at salvation?
- What is predestination?
- What did Martin Luther mean by the doctrine of “justification by faith alone”?

#### **4. The Holy Spirit, The Church, & The Last Things**

- Read Course Handbook pages 76-124
- Read Christian Theology chapters 12, 15, 16, & 18

**As you read this section, have these questions in mind:**

- How do you experience the Wind of the Spirit?
- How does the Holy Spirit work in the life of a Christian?
- Scripture calls each Christian a saint. What does this mean to you?
- How does the church fulfill the Great Commission?
- What is going to happen when Jesus returns?
- How can the church be "holy" when it is full of sinners?