Emory University  
Candler School of Theology  

HT 501: History of Early Christian Thought; Fall 2013  
TuTh, 8-9:20AM, RARB 252  

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 9:30-10:30AM, and by appointment  

Content & Objectives  
This course is a survey of the history of early Christian thought. We will attend to the diverse historical and cultural settings of the early church, but focus upon the theological and doctrinal development that occupied the Christian church prior to the Reformation. Particular attention is given to the doctrinal foundations established during the first 500 years of Christian history, including the major ecumenical creeds. Students shall be briefly introduced to the medieval church by means of its contrasts and continuities with the patristic period. 

This course functions as an introduction to several different facets of Candler’s curriculum. Firstly, as one of the two courses that every entering MDiv student takes, the course functions to introduce you to graduate theological education and, more broadly, academic life at Candler. Secondly, it introduces you to the common core of the Christian tradition. Christianity is a historically based religion, every Christian’s story did in fact begin during this time period, as a result this course should help you better understand your Christian identity by elucidating the history and tradition in which you stand (even, and especially, if you don’t know it). Finally, the faculty of historical and systematic theology consider this course the first in a sequence that culminates in the study of contemporary theological accounts. Every theological account engages, positively or critically, the accounts articulated in this first period of the church’s history. This course will provide you with the theological categories and language needed to join this conversation yourself. 

This course is designed to further the following Curricular Values/Outcomes articulated by Candler:  
- Grounding in Christian texts, traditions, theologies, and practices  
- Knowledge and experience of a multi-ethnic, intercultural, ecumenical, and religiously diverse world  
- Skills in critical and imaginative thinking, responsible interpretation, and effective communication  

Assignments  
1. The daily reading assignments are the most important part of this course, as class discussions will consider the required reading for that day. I expect you to come to class prepared to discuss the assigned readings. If you take the time to do the readings carefully so that you understand the important ideas in each one, then you will be prepared for class, and you should also do well on the quizzes and exams. I will provide a guide for each reading on Blackboard or Reserves Direct. 

2. Numerous quizzes shall be given. Each quiz will cover the reading assignment for that day, and only that required reading; quiz questions will be taken from that day’s reading guide. Quizzes will not be
announced in advance. They are designed to ensure that you are doing the readings, doing them well, studying the material in preparation for class, and attending each class.

If you miss a quiz due to an unavoidable absence (e.g., a family emergency), it is your responsibility to contact Brian Gronewoller within 24 hours by email, and arrange to make it up prior to the next class (if at all possible). For an illness to count as an unavoidable absence you must email Brian prior to class. If you miss a quiz due to an avoidable absence, you will not be permitted to make it up.

3. Art reflection paper. We will spend one class (November 14th) considering a few pieces of art that illustrate a theological theme that we have discussed. Students shall then write a short paper containing their personal thoughts on the way in which that work illustrates or gives insight into that theological theme as understood by artists in different social and cultural contexts. This paper should contain your own ideas – what you think about the piece. The purpose of this paper is not to discuss how this piece engages what someone else (e.g., something we have read in class) says about this theological theme. If, by chance, you have read something in class that has influenced how you think about one of these themes, then you may mention that in the paper but do so as an aspect of discussing your own interpretation.

Paper Specifications: Papers should be 3 pages long, they should be double-spaced, they should use a standard 12-point font (e.g., Times New Roman, Arial, Courier), they should have a 1” border on the top and bottom and 1.25” border on the sides, and they should be printed on separate sheets – not front-to-back. Papers that do not abide by these specifications will be reduced by 1 grade level (e.g., A to A-). Papers are due on November 21st. On that day students must bring to class with them a hard-copy of the paper, as well as upload a copy (formatted as a Word or pdf document) to the SafeAssign folder on Blackboard. Papers must be turned in by class-time on the due date in both of these ways to be considered on time. Any paper not submitted on time will be reduced by one grade level for every day it is late. No papers will be accepted after November 26th.

4. A midterm and final exam shall be given. The midterm will cover everything discussed and read prior to that exam. The final will be comprehensive. The midterm and final will contain questions previously given in the quizzes, but they will not be limited to those questions. They may contain the following types of questions: multiple-choice, true & false, fill-in-the-blank, and short answer.

Do not miss an exam. If you miss the midterm exam due to an unavoidable absence, you must give me advance notice by email if at all possible, if not, then you must contact me within 24 hours by email. If you miss the midterm exam due to an avoidable absence, you must contact me within 24 hours by email or you may not be permitted to make it up. In fairness to others, any midterm missed due to an avoidable absence will receive, at minimum, a reduction of one grade level (e.g., A to A-). Any make-up exam must be taken as soon as possible.

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**Disability Services**

If you are a student registered with the Office of Disability Services, accomodations are effective on the date of the in-person discussion with the course instructor(s) regarding implementation of course accommodations and the receipt of the accommodation letter (this should happen simultaneously).

More information about Emory's Office of Disability Services may be found here:
http://www.ods.emory.edu/about.htm

**Performance Evaluation:**
Grade levels (with reference to the Candler Handbook):

A 100-94; A- 93-90
Reserved for outstanding work of exceptionally high quality that reflects a creative appropriation of course materials and practices.

B+ 89-87; B 86-84; B- 83-80
Work that meets all of the stated course requirements and reflects a firm grasp of course materials and practices.

C+ 79-77; C 76-74; C- 73-70
Work that shows a basic grasp of the course materials and practices.

D+ 69-67; D 67-64
Work that shows serious deficiencies but meets the minimal requirements of the course.

F 63 and below
Work that fails to meet the minimal requirements of the course. No credit is given.

Grade Elements:
- Art Reflection Paper 15%
- Quizzes 20%
- Midterm 30%
- Final 35%

Class Policies

Attendance: I expect you to attend every class. Should you find missing a class unavoidable, you must contact Brian Gronewoller within 24 hours, if at all possible. More than three avoidable absences shall result in the reduction of your grade by one grade level, further reductions shall be imposed for every succeeding three absences. Should you anticipate an extended leave of absence, you must contact the Director of Student Life and Spiritual Formation, as well as the Registrar. If you miss class, you are responsible for getting notes from a classmate.

Academic Honesty: I will not tolerate academic dishonesty. Work you submit must be your own, whether a paper, or answers to a quiz or an exam. For the first offense, you will receive zero credit for the assignment in question. For the second offense, you will fail the course. A detailed discussion of Candler's Student Honor and Conduct Code is available in the course catalogue.

Electronic Devices: Cell phones should be turned off during class time, unless the potential exists for a personal or professional emergency – in these cases phones must be on vibrate. Laptops, iPads, etc., are permitted during class, but must only be used for the purposes of the present class discussion. Should you be found to be using your laptop for purposes other than the present class discussion (e.g., email, facebook, surfing, other coursework), or in ways that distract your fellow students, then you will not be permitted to use it in future classes. Other electronic devices are not permitted.

Food/Drink: No eating in class; beverages are allowed.

Texts Required

Miscellaneous texts on Reserve.

**Recommended**

- Offers the best narrative of the development of doctrine in the Christian East. The text offers further comments on many of the authors and treatises we discuss.

- An in-depth survey of the development of Christian doctrine from the patristic period through the twentieth century. The text emphasizes the patristic and medieval periods, with essays written by leading scholars. Turn to this text rather than Justo Gonzalez’s *The Story of Christianity*, which I do not recommend because of its factual errors.

- Prior to Ayres’ text, Hanson’s offered the recent standard discussion of the development of early Christian doctrine. While some of his analysis has been corrected and surpassed by Ayres, among others, this text continues to offer many historical details that Ayres does not.

- A recent survey of early Christian monasticism. Fills in many of the wholes left by Derwas Chitty’s classic, *The Desert a City*.

- The standard text on the creedal statements of the early church. It includes excellent analyses of the creeds themselves, as well as detailed discussions of the theological milieu from which they came.

- This text offers an accessible discussion of Christian doctrine, particularly helpful in its simplicity of explanation. It is, however, beset by many older understandings of the development of Christian theology that have since been shown to be inadequate.

- An introductory level survey of the development of doctrine from the early church through the modern period. This text may be helpful if this material is new to you; it is far more basic than Cunliffe-Jones.

- A recent survey of the first thousand years of Christian history that better tends to the spread of Christianity around the world. In order to do so, however, its discussion of Christian history is more episodic than continuous.
Reading Schedule

*Readings are to be done prior to and in preparation for the class of that date. The reading guides posted on Reserves Direct list the readings required for each class.

Aug 29    Introductions, Syllabus, Expectations

Sept 3    Introductory Lecture 1: The Church & Its World
          Periodization of Early Christianity
          A Jewish, Greek, & Roman World (Ferguson, C.1)
          Hellenization
          The Church in Jerusalem, Antioch, Rome, Ephesus, Syria, & Alexandria (Ferguson, C.2)

5        Introductory Lecture 2: Theology & Its Limitations

10       The Second Century: Early
          ‘Jewish’ & ‘Gentile’ Christianities (Ferguson, C.3)
          Apostolic Fathers: Clement of Rome & Ignatius of Antioch

12       The Second Century: Middle (Ferguson, C.4, pp. 64-79 only)
          Church-State Relations
          Persecution
          Apologists
          Justin Martyr
          Illustrate the Apologetical Approach
          Prophecies read of Christ
          Trinitarian Confession, Binitarian Logic
          Jewish & Greek Influences

17       The Second Century: Middle to Late
          Sects (Ferguson, C.5)
          Marcionism
          Gnosticism
          Encratism
          Montanism
          Catholic Response: Irenaeus of Lyons (Ferguson, 107-11)
          Apostolic Tradition / Rules of Truth
          Apostolic Succession
          Canon
          Interpretation of Scripture

19       Institutionalization of the Canon & Interpretation of Scripture
          Canonicity (Ferguson, 112-22)
          Hebrew Scriptures
          Septuagint
          New Testament
          Old Latin Texts (Vetus Latina)
          Criteria of Canonicity
          Apocryphal Texts
          Vulgate
Medieval legislation of the Vulgate

Interpretation of Scripture
  Irenaeus of Lyons
  Origen
    Norms for Allegory
    Literal & Spiritual Senses of Scripture
  Antiochene v. Alexandrian Trope
  Gregory the Great: 3-fold Sense of Scripture
  Medieval 4-fold Sense of Scripture

24 Church-State Relations
  Persecution and Martyrdom
    2nd Century: Lyons & Vienne (Ferguson, 79-84)
    Early 3rd Century: Perpetua & Felicity
    Mid 3rd Century (Ferguson, 160-67)
      Decian & Valerian Persecutions
      Cyprian & the Rigorist Schism in North Africa
      Foundation for Donatist Schism
    Early 4th Century: Diocletian’s Persecution (Ferguson, 178-91)
    Constantine, Edict of Milan (313): Toleration
    Theodosius I, Edict of Thessalonica (380): State Religion

  Political Theology
    Eusebius of Caesarea, Life of Constantine
    Augustine of Hippo, City of God
    Leo & Gelasius I (Ferguson, 303-04)
    Hugh of St Victor
    Bernard of Clairvoux
    Innocent III

26 Sacramental Life of the Church
  1st-early 2nd century: Didache
  mid 2nd century: Justin Martyr (Ferguson, 148-53)
  early 3rd century: Tertullian & Apostolic Tradition
  early/mid 3rd century: Didascalia Apostolorum
  4th century (Ferguson, 244-52)
    Cyril of Jerusalem (orthodox)
    Apostolic Constitutions (Arian; Syrian/Asian)
  11th century: 2nd Eucharistic Controversy (Ferguson, 426-29)
  11th-12th century: Penance & Confession (Ferguson, 410)

Oct 1 Monastic Life of the Church
  Jewish & Greek Antecedents
  Types/Stages: Connected (Aphrahat), Hermetic (Antony), Coenobitic (Pachomius)
  Syria, Egypt, Asia Minor, Palestine, Gaul, Rome (Ferguson, 227-34)
  Evagrian Monasticism: Contemplation
  Benedictine Monasticism: the Rule, Gregory the Great, Charlemagne (Ferguson, 317-20)
  Women: Macrina, Melania the Elder, Melania the Younger, Synclletona
  Cluni Revival (Ferguson, 386-90)
  11th-12th Century Monastic Expansion (Ferguson, 441-47)
12th-13th Century Rise of the Mendicant Orders (Ferguson, 474-81)

3 From the Mediterranean to the World
   4th-5th Century Missionary Expansion (Ferguson, 234-37)
   Christianity around the World (Wilken, 205-45)
      Egypt & the Copts
      Nubia
      Ethiopia
      Syriac-speaking church: Edessa, Persia, the Sassanid Empire
      Armenia & Georgia
      Central Asia, China, & India
   Missions to the Goths (Ferguson, 289-91)
   Celtic & Anglo-Saxon Christianity (Ferguson, 353-59)
   Anglo-Saxon Missions to the Continent (Ferguson, 360-63)

8 Review Day

10 Midterm Exam

15 No Class: Fall Break

17 Late 2nd – Early 3rd Century Theology (Ferguson, 123-32, 136-38)
   Antecedents: Justin Martyr
   Irenaeus
      Trinitarian Theology
      Christology
   Asian & Roman Monarchianism & Sabellian Modalism
   2-Stage Logos Theology (Theophilus, Tertullian, Hippolytus)

22 Mid 3rd Century Theology: Origen (Ferguson, 132-36)
   Trinitarian Theology: Eternal Generation & Subordination
   Christology: Problematic of the Human Soul
   Soteriology: Theosis

24 Late 3rd – Early 4th Century Theology: The Origins of a Conflict
   Arius (Ferguson, 191-93)
   Alexander of Alexandria
   Eusebius of Caesarea

29 Mid 4th Century Theology: The Heart of the Debate (Ferguson, 193-211)
   Synod of Antioch (325)
   Council of Nicaea (325): Homoousians
   Marcellus of Ancyra
   Athanasius of Alexandria
   Eunomius of Cyzicus: Heterousians
   Basil of Ancyra: Homoiousians
   Pneumatomachians
Late 4th Century Theology: Trinitarian Resolution (Ferguson, 212-225)
  Council of Alexandria (363)
  Basil of Caesarea
  Gregory of Nazianzus
  Gregory of Nyssa
  1 Ousia, 3 Hypostases
  Inseparable Operation(s)
  Council of Constantinople (381)

Nov 5  Augustine of Hippo (Ferguson, C. 14)
  Manichaeism: Materiality
  Platonism: Immateriality & Transcendence
  Willing: Failure of Platonic Knowing
  Donatist Schism (Ferguson, 187-91)
  Trinitarian Theology
    Inseparable Operations
    Noetic Analogy
    Procession of the Holy Spirit
  Grace: Pelagian Debate

7  Christological Controversy I: 4th – early 5th Century (Ferguson, 255-64)
  Athanasius of Alexandria
  Apollinaris of Laodicea
  Theodore of Mopsuestia
  Nestorius of Antioch
  Cyril of Alexandria

12  Christological Controversies II: 5th Century & Beyond
  Leo's Tome
  Council of Chalcedon (451) (Ferguson, 264-67)
  Monenergism
  Monothelitism (Ferguson, 327-31)
  Iconoclastic Controversy (Ferguson, 336-42)

14  Art Reflection: Imagining Jesus

19  Transition to the Medieval Church
  Barbarian Invasions (Ferguson, 286-305)
  Development of the Papacy
  Rise of Islam & Muslim Conquest (Ferguson, 332-36)
  Charlemagne (Ferguson, 363-79)
  Schism between East and West (Ferguson, 323-26, 396-99)
  First Crusade (Ferguson, 410-22)

21  11th & 12th Century (Art Reflection Papers Due) (Ferguson, 423-40, 445-68)
Scholasticism
Anselm of Canterbury
  Atonement Theory Through the Ages
    Recapitulation
    Theosis
    Ransom Theory
    Moral Influence
    Substitutionary Atonement
    Satisfaction Theory
Peter Abelard
Hugh of St. Victor
Peter Lombard
Hildegard of Bingen

26  No Class: SBL Annual Meeting
28  No Class: Thanksgiving Break

Dec 3  13th Century (Ferguson, 481-500)
  Founding of Universities
  Thomas Aquinas
    Theology of Grace
  Bonaventure
  Roger Bacon
  John Duns Scotus

5    Late Medieval Period (Ferguson, C.24)
    Medieval Dissent
    Inquisition
    Women's Spirituality: Julian of Norwich
    Council of Lyons (1274)
    Boniface VIII & National Monarchies
      Unam Sanctam (1302)

10   Review Day
TBD  Final Exam