

THE THEOLOGY OF THE EARLY CHURCH SYLLABUS

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

A study of the development of Christian doctrine from the second to the fifth centuries.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES

- A. The student will be able to trace and describe the general development of the early church's views on Theology Proper, Trinitarianism, Christology, Pneumatology, Anthropology, Hamartiology, Soteriology, Bibliology, Ecclesiology, the Sacraments, and Eschatology.
- B. The student will describe the development of Christian doctrine from the second to the fifth centuries.
- C. The student will discuss theological issues from primary materials of the second through the fifth centuries.
- D. The student will grow in his or her perspective of how exegesis, culture, and tradition shape theological concepts.

III. COURSE TEXTBOOKS

A. Required

H. E. J. Cowdrey, "John Norman Davidson Kelly, 1909–1997," in *Proceedings of the British Academy* 101 (1999): 419–437. [PDF posted on course documents page.]

Kelly, J.N.D. *Early Christian Doctrines*. Rev. ed. San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1978. (511 pp.)

Primary Source reading as assigned in schedule:

The Didache

Ignatius of Antioch, *Ephesians, Magnesians, Trallians, Romans, Philadelphians, Smyrnaeans, Polycarp*

Polycarp, *Letter to the Philipppians*

Aristides of Athens, *Apology*

Melito of Sardis, *On Pascha*

Athenagoras, *Embassy for the Christians and Resurrection of the Dead*.

Theophilus of Antioch, *To Autolycus*

Justin Martyr, *First and Second Apologies and Dialogue with Trypho*

Irenaeus, *Demonstration of the Apostolic Preaching and Against Heresies*, Book 1

Hippolytus, *On Christ and Antichrist*

Tertullian, *Against Praxeas and On the Flesh of Christ*

Origen, *On First Principles*, Books 1–2

Cyprian, *On the Unity of the Church*

Lactantius, *Epitome of the Divine Institutes* (NOTE: Read **only** the epitome, not the entire work!)

Athanasius, *On the Incarnation*

Basil of Caesarea, *On the Holy Spirit*

Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, Books 1–4

Vincent of Lérins, *Commonitorium*

Boethius, *The Trinity Is One God, Not Three Gods and On the Catholic Faith*

IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. Reading Assignments (60%)

Reading of textbooks and ancient writings must be completed according to the class schedule. No credit is given for late reading. Reading will be the basis for class discussion. Because this is a seminar

style upper-level elective in historical theology, students are expected to read critically, placing the writing in its historical-theological context and being prepared to participate in discussion.

To assist students in preparing for class discussion, a reading guide for J.N.D. Kelly's *Early Christian Doctrines* will be provided on the course documents page at campusnet.dts.edu. Though students are not required to provide written answers to all of these questions, each student should come fully prepared to interact with the topics addressed in the reading guide, as these will form the basis for class discussion.

B. Written Assignments (20%)

1. **Doctrinal Development Notes (10%).** Each student will be assigned one of the following areas of doctrine for which he or she will be responsible throughout the course during primary source reading and discussion:
 - a. Theology Proper—Existence, nature, and attributes of divinity *per se*, including contrasting Christian concept with others
 - b. Trinitarianism—Intratrinitarian relationships of Father, Son, and Spirit; Trinitarian articulation
 - c. Christology—Deity and humanity of Christ, incarnation, death, resurrection
 - d. Pneumatology—The personhood, divinity, and works of the Holy Spirit, including spiritual gifts
 - e. Anthropology—The creation, material and immaterial natures of humanity, and the image of God
 - f. Hamartiology—The Fall and resulting lostness of humanity, including original sin, depravity, and the need for grace
 - g. Soteriology—Atonement, role of faith and works in salvation, election, free will, and security
 - h. Bibliology—General and special revelation, inspiration of Scripture, inerrancy, authority, and sufficiency of Scripture, function of tradition
 - i. Ecclesiology—Origin, nature, purpose of the church, its organization, authority, unity, holiness, catholicity, apostolicity
 - j. Sacraments—Baptism and eucharist, nature and function of sacraments, place in worship and life of the church
 - k. Eschatology—Return of Christ, millennial views, order of events, resurrection, and personal salvation (what happens to a person when they die)

Students will come to class prepared to orally present a summary of his or her assigned doctrine's explication, defense, or development based on the readings for that day. Even if a student is not called upon to present, she or he must come prepared with written notes or a summary. These brief presentations will be the basis for class discussions regarding that particular topic related to the reading that day. NOTE: Daily single-sheet summaries will not be turned in either online or to the professor.

2. **Doctrinal Development Synopsis (10%).** Building on his or her doctrinal notes prepared for class throughout the semester, each student will write a brief five-page paper that traces the development of his or her particular doctrine through the first five centuries of the church. The student is expected to supplement his or her synopsis with additional primary and secondary source research related to the topic. The five-page paper may be single-spaced, but its footnotes must conform to Turabian style. The Doctrinal Development Synopsis will be turned in on the Canvas course page by the end of finals week.

C. Final Exam (20%)

A final exam will be given at the end of the semester covering major introductory and content issues in the theology of the early church. This exam will consist of 20 multiple-choice questions and will be taken online (on the course Canvas page) before the end of finals week. It will be a closed-book, closed-note type of exam *with a very short time limit*. All questions will be drawn from core content and key concepts covered in the Reading/Discussion Guide for J. N. D. Kelly's *Early Christian*

Doctrines. This exam will not delve into irrelevant minutiae. The purpose of the exam is to encourage a final review of the course material and to reinforce major persons, issues, and developments.

V. COURSE POLICIES

A. Weight Given to Course Requirements for Grading

Reading:	60%
Notes and Presentations/Participation:	10%
Doctrinal Development Synopsis	10%
Final Exam	20%

B. Class Participation

The student is expected to attend every class period fully prepared to contribute to class discussion with collegiality.

C. Late Assignments

NO late assignments are accepted except under **extraordinary** circumstances.

D. Absences

Absences may be penalized in accordance with the policy outlined in the *Student Handbook*.

E. Letter/Numerical Grade Scale

A+	99-100	B+	91-93	C+	83-85	D+	75-77	F	0-69
A	96-98	B	88-90	C	80-82	D	72-74		
A-	94-95	B-	86-87	C-	78-79	D-	70-71		

VI. COURSE SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

DTS does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the operation of any of its programs and activities. To avoid discrimination the student is responsible for informing the Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities and the course instructor of any disabling condition that will require modifications.

VII. COURSE LECTURES AND ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE

ANF=Ante-Nicene Fathers; NPNF 1=Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Series 1: Writings of Augustine; NPNF 2=Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Series 2, all of which are available online at www.ccel.org. Students are not required to purchase primary source texts. Bibliographic data of alternate English translations and primary text editions are given to aid the student in locating these volumes as needed. Please note that although many of the primary source documents are in the public domain and therefore available online at www.ccel.org or at books.google.com, recent editions and translations are available in hard copy and Melito's *On Pascha* is not available online.

Class	Date	Assignments Due
1	8/29	None. Overview of the Patristic Period.
2	9/5	H. E. J. Cowdrey, "John Norman Davidson Kelly, 1909–1997," in <i>Proceedings of the British Academy</i> 101 (1999): 419–437. Kelly, <i>Early Christian Doctrines</i>, chapters 1–6 (pp. 1–162). Answer questions on reading and discussion guide.
3	9/12	Kelly, <i>Early Christian Doctrines</i>, chapters 7–12 (pp. 163–343). Answer questions on reading and discussion guide.
4	9/19	Kelly, <i>Early Christian Doctrines</i>, chapters 13–18 (pp. 344–499). Answer questions on reading and discussion guide.

5	9/26	<p>The Didache (ANF 7). English and Greek: Michael W. Holmes, <i>The Apostolic Fathers: Greek Texts and English Translations</i>, 3d ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008). Greek: Franz Xaver Funk, et al., eds, <i>Die Apostolischen Väter: Griechisch-Deutsche Parallelausgabe</i> (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1992).</p> <p>Ignatius of Antioch, Ephesians, Magnesians, Trallians, Romans, Philadelphians, Smyrnaeans, Polycarp (ANF 1—beware of the long recension!). English and Greek: Michael W. Holmes, <i>The Apostolic Fathers: Greek Texts and English Translations</i>, 3d ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008). Greek: Franz Xaver Funk, et al., eds, <i>Die Apostolischen Väter: Griechisch-Deutsche Parallelausgabe</i> (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1992).</p> <p>Polycarp, Letter to the Philippians (ANF 1). English and Greek: Michael W. Holmes, <i>The Apostolic Fathers: Greek Texts and English Translations</i>, 3d ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008). Greek: Franz Xaver Funk, et al., eds, <i>Die Apostolischen Väter: Griechisch-Deutsche Parallelausgabe</i> (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1992).</p> <p>Aristides of Athens, Apology. English: J. Rendel Harris, ed., <i>The Apology of Aristides on Behalf of the Christians</i>, ed. J. Armitage Robinson, 2d ed., Texts and Studies, vol. 1/1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1893). Greek and Syriac: Bernard Pouderon and others, <i>Aristide: Apologie</i>, Sources Chrétiennes (Paris: Cerf, 2003).</p>
6	10/3	<p>Melito of Sardis, On Pascha. English: Alistair Stewart-Sykes, <i>On Pascha: With the Fragments of Melito and other Material Related to the Quartodecimans</i>, Popular Patristics Series (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2001). English and Greek: Stuart George Hall, <i>Melito of Sardis: On Pascha and Fragments</i>, ed. Henry Chadwick, Oxford Early Christian Texts (Oxford: Clarendon, 1979).</p> <p>Theophilus of Antioch, To Autolycus (ANF 2). Greek: Miroslav Marcovich, ed., <i>Theophili Antiocheni Ad Autolycum</i>, ed. H. Christian Brennecke and E. Mühlenberg, Patristische Texte und Studien, vol. 44 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1995).</p> <p>Athenagoras of Athens, Embassy for the Christians, Resurrection of the Dead (ANF 4) English: Joseph Hugh Crehan, ed. <i>Athenagoras, Embassy for the Christians, the Resurrection of the Dead</i>, Ancient Christian Writers, ed. Johannes Quasten and Joseph C. Plumpe (Westminster, MD: Newman, 1956). Greek: Miroslav Marcovich, ed., <i>Athenagoras: Legatio Pro Christianis</i>, ed. Miroslav Marcovich, Patristische Texte und Studien, vol. 31 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1990).</p>
7	10/10	<p>Justin, First and Second Apologies (ANF 1). English: Leslie W. Barnard, ed., <i>St. Justin Martyr: The First and Second Apologies</i>, Ancient Christian Writers, vol. 56 (New York: Paulist, 1997). Greek: Miroslav Marcovich, ed., <i>Apologiae pro Christianis, Dialogus cum Tryphone</i>, ed. H. Christian Brennecke and E. Mühlenberg, Patristische Texte und Studien, vols. 38 and 47 in one vol. (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2005).</p> <p>Justin, Dialogue with Trypho (ANF 1). English: Thomas B. Falls, Michael Slusser, and Thomas P. Halton, eds., <i>St. Justin Martyr: Dialogue with Trypho</i>, Selections from the Fathers of the Church (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2003). Greek: Miroslav Marcovich, ed., <i>Apologiae pro Christianis, Dialogus cum Tryphone</i>, ed. H. Christian Brennecke and E. Mühlenberg, Patristische Texte und Studien, vols. 38 and 47 in one vol. (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2005).</p>
8	10/17	<p>Irenaeus, Demonstration of the Apostolic Preaching. English: Iain M. MacKenzie, <i>Irenaeus's Demonstration of the Apostolic Preaching: A Theological Commentary and Translation</i>, trans. J. Armitage Robinson (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2002). Original languages: Adelin Rousseau, ed., <i>Irénée de Lyon, Démonstration de la prédication apostolique</i>, Sources chrétiennes 46 (Paris: Cerf, 1995).</p> <p>Irenaeus, Against Heresies, Book 1 (ANF 1). English: Dominic J. Unger and John J. Dillon, eds., <i>St. Irenaeus of Lyons, Adversus haeresis 1/1</i>, Ancient Christian Writers 53 (New York: Newman, 1992); Greek/Latin: Adelin Rousseau and L. Doutreleau, eds., <i>Irénée de Lyon: Contre les hérésies, Livre 1</i>, vol. 2: Texte et traduction, Sources chrétiennes 264 (Paris: Cerf, 1979).</p> <p>Hippolytus, On Christ and Antichrist (ANF 5). Greek: Jacques-Paul Migne, ed., <i>Patrologiae Cursus Completus</i>, Series Graeca, vol. 10, <i>S. Gregorius Thaumaturgus, S. Hippolytus Portuensis, Dionysius Alexandrinus, Julius Africanus, Alii.</i> (J.-P. Migne, 1857).</p>
9	10/24	<p>Tertullian, Against Praxeas (ANF 3). English and Latin: Ernest Evans, ed., trans. <i>Tertullian: Adversus Praxean liber</i>. London: SPCK, 1948.</p> <p>Tertullian, On the Flesh of Christ (ANF 3). English and Latin: Ernest Evans, ed., trans. <i>Tertullian's Treatise on the Incarnation (De Carne Christi Liber)</i>. London: SPCK, 1956.</p>

10	10/31	<p>Origen, <i>On First Principles, Books 1–2</i> (ANF 4). English: Butterworth, G. K., ed., trans. <i>Origen: On First Principles</i>. Gloucester, MA: Smith, 1973. Greek: Ernst Rudolph Depenning, ed., <i>Origenes: De principiis (Rufino interprete)</i>. Leipzig: Bibliopolio Dykiano, 1836.</p> <p>Cyprian, <i>On the Unity of the Church</i> (ANF 5). English and Latin: Bévenot, Maurice, ed., trans. <i>St. Cyprian: The Lapsed, The Unity of the Catholic Church</i>. Ancient Christian Writers 25. Mahwah, NJ: Newman, 1957. Latin: Bévenot, Maurice, ed. <i>Cyprian: De lapsis; De ecclesiae catholicae unitate</i>. Oxford Early Christian Texts. Oxford: Clarendon, 1971. [Note, 1971 edition has parallel Latin and English.]</p>
11	11/7	<p>Lactantius, <i>Epitome of the Divine Institutes</i> (ANF 7). Bowen, Anthony and Peter Garnsey, ed., trans. <i>Lactantius: Divine Institutes</i>. Translated Texts for Historians 40. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2003. Latin text: Perrin, Michel, ed., trans. <i>Lactance: Épitomé des institutions divines</i>. Sources chrétiennes 335. Paris: Cerf, 1987.</p> <p>Athanasius, <i>On the Incarnation</i> (NPNF 2.4). English: Behr, John, ed. <i>On the Incarnation: The Treatise De Incarnatione Verbi Dei</i>. New rev. ed. Popular Patristics Seris. Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1996. Greek and English: Thomson, R. W., ed. and trans. <i>Athanasius: Contra gentes and De Incarnatione</i>. Oxford Early Christian Texts. Oxford: Clarendon, 1971.</p> <p>Basil of Caesarea, <i>On the Holy Spirit</i> (NPNF 2.8). English: Hildebrand, Stephen M., ed. <i>St. Basil the Great: On the Holy Spirit</i>. Yonkers, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 2011. Greek: Pruche, Benoît, ed., trans. <i>Basile de Césarée: Sur le Saint-Esprit</i>. Rev. and exp. ed. Sources chrétiennes 17. Paris: Cerf, 2002.</p>
	11/12 - 11/23	Reading Week and Thanksgiving Break: No Class
12	11/28	<p>Augustine, <i>On Christian Doctrine, Books 1–3</i> (NPNF 1.2). English: Robertson, D. W., ed., trans. <i>Augustine: On Christian Doctrine</i>. New York: Macmillan, 1986. Latin: Martin, J., ed. <i>Augustine: De doctrina christiana</i>. Corpus Christianorum Series Latina 32. Turnhout: Brepols, 1962.</p>
13	12/5	<p>Augustine, <i>On Christian Doctrine, Book 4</i> (NPNF 1.2). English: Robertson, D. W., ed., trans. <i>Augustine: On Christian Doctrine</i>. New York: Macmillan, 1986. Latin: Martin, J., ed. <i>Augustine: De doctrina christiana</i>. Corpus Christianorum Series Latina 32. Turnhout: Brepols, 1962.</p> <p>Vincent of Lérins, <i>Commonitorium</i> (NPNF 2.11). Latin: Demeulenaere, R., ed. <i>Commonitorium; Excerpta</i>. Corpus Christianorum Series Latina 64. Turnhout: Brepols, 1985.</p>
14	12/12	<p>Boethius, <i>The Trinity Is One God, Not Three Gods and On the Catholic Faith</i>. Latin and English: Boethius, <i>The Theological Tractates, The Consolation of Philosophy</i>. trans. H. F. Stewart, E. K. Rand, S. J. Tester. Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971. [Original 1918 edition is available online free of charge.]</p>
15	12/17 - 12/20	<p>Doctrinal Development Synopsis (Turned in Online at Canvas Course Page)</p> <p>Final Exam (Taken Online at Canvas Course Page)</p> <p>All assignments due by MIDNIGHT on THURSDAY of Finals Week</p>

Note: The professor reserves the right to make modifications to the above schedule.