

**HERESY & ORTHODOXY IN THE EARLY CHURCH**  
**HIST 6327/THEO 6327**  
**FALL 2019**  
**REX D. BUTLER**  
*rbutler@nobts.edu*  
**Office:** Dodd Building: Office 105  
504-282-4455 x. 3214

One of the reasons I love teaching is the opportunity to relate to students. Please feel free to email me, call me, or come see me at home or at my office. I want to help you in any way I can. **Call me if you have a problem or a question. Do not wait until it is too late for me to help!**

I. Mission Statement

The mission of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary is to equip leaders to fulfill the Great Commission and the Great Commandments through the local church and its ministries.

II. Core Values Focus

Each academic year, a core value is emphasized. This academic year, the core value is Spiritual Vitality – “We are a worshiping community emphasizing both personal spirituality and gathering together as a Seminary family for the praise and adoration of God and instruction in His Word.”

III. Curriculum Competencies Addressed

The Seminary has seven key competencies in its academic program. They are: Biblical Exposition, Christian Theological Heritage, Discipleship Making, Interpersonal Skills, Servant Leadership, Spiritual and Character Formation, and Worship Leadership. The key competency addressed in this course is Christian Theological Heritage

IV. Course Description for the Catalog:

This course covers early heresies, the initial responses of the church, later Christological heresies, and the ecumenical councils. Topics include Gnosticism and the Gnostic Gospels, Marcion, Monarchianism, Montanism, canonization, creeds, apostolic succession, Arianism, and the Council of Nicaea. Attention also is given to contemporary critics of traditional orthodoxy and to modern expressions of early heresies with the intention of developing an effective apologetic response.

V. Recommendation

It is recommended but not required that students for this course should have completed HIST 5300.

## VI. Student Learning Outcomes:

By the completion of this course, students should be able to:

- The student demonstrates an understanding of significant individuals, movements, and doctrines involved in heresy and orthodoxy in the early church.
- The student demonstrates an ability to apply principles learned from the study of the heresy and orthodoxy in the early church to church and ministry today.
- The student demonstrates an ability to communicate understanding and application of principles learned from the study of heresy and orthodoxy in the early church.

## VII. Required Texts:

These are required textbooks for this class:

Bettensen, Henry and Chris Maunder, eds. *Documents of the Christian Church*. 3<sup>d</sup> ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Brown, Harold O. J. *Heresies: Heresy and Orthodoxy in the History of the Church*. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 1998.

Ehrman, Bart D. *Lost Christianities: The Battles for Scripture and the Faiths We Never Knew*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Kostenberger, Andreas J. and Michael J. Kruger. *The Heresy of Orthodoxy*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010.

There will be additional required reading from primary sources that are available on the Internet.

## VIII. Requirements:

A. *Background Papers*: These papers are intended to be prepared by students and presented in class as teaching tools. Each paper will be eight to ten pages long and written according to standard guidelines (Turabian; Times New Roman 12 pt. font; double-spaced; standard margins, etc.) and include a bibliography of at least six resources (textbooks, reference books, and the Internet are allowed, but you must consult a minimum of three monographs as well).

All Background Papers are due on **September 19**. Presentation dates will be set later. Students will present their papers with Power Point lectures.

The topics for these papers will be assigned by the end of the first day of class:

- Ebionism (Judaizing Christianity)
- Gnosticism
- Marcion
- Monarchianism (Adoptionism & Patripassionism)
- Montanism

- Canonization
- Creeds & Apostolic Succession
- Irenaeus (re: Gnosticism, Canon & Apostolic Succession) – **Tommy Doughty**
- Tertullian – **Rex Butler**
- Origen (re: the doctrine of Eternal Generation)
- Arianism
- Athanasius (re: his treatise *On the Incarnation*)

B. *Major Research Paper*: Each student will consult with the professor to select a topic that relates to one or more of the emphases of this course. The topic *could be* a development and expansion of the student's research in the background paper. Fifteen to twenty pages in length, the paper should demonstrate the student's ability to think clearly and critically, engage in responsible research, dialogue objectively with differing viewpoints, reach defensible conclusions, and write in an acceptable style (Turabian; Times New Roman 12 pt. font; double-spaced; standard margins, etc.). A selected bibliography should accompany the paper. **Due October 24.**

The research paper will be evaluated as follows:

1. Grammar and style: Spelling, sentence and paragraph development; punctuation; and conformity to the 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> edition of Turabian. (20 points)
2. Clarity and Coherence: Balance; thoroughness; organization; logical development; overall sense of the paper. (20 points)
3. Research: Bibliography; type and variety of sources (primary, secondary, monographs, journal articles, websites, etc.); most bibliographic entries should be accompanied by footnote citations. (20 points)
4. Historical Awareness and Insight: Factual accuracy; awareness of historical connections (continuity/discontinuity, cause/effect, contrasts/comparisons); sensitivity to historical context; awareness of the historical impact of a person. (20 points)
5. Analysis and Evaluation: Going beyond the mere reporting of facts to include explanation, interpretation, analysis of material; evaluation of strengths and weakness of a person; demonstration that you have thought about the material that you have researched. Give strong and insightful introduction and conclusion. (20 points)

C. *Book Review*: Every student will write a review of a recent book written on one of the themes of this course. The review should be six to eight double-spaced typewritten pages in length. Bibliographical information should appear at the top of the first page of the review. The review also should contain 1) a brief biographical sketch of the author, 2) a brief summary [two to three pages] of the contents of the book, 3) a statement of the author's purpose and the extent to which the purpose was realized, 4) a statement regarding the book's uniqueness, 5) a description of the author's style, 6) a description of the author's biases, and 7) a concluding evaluation. **Due November 21.**

Books to be reviewed include but are not limited to:

- Darrell L. Bock & Daniel B. Wallace, *Dethroning Jesus*
- Robert Bowman, J. Ed Komoszewski & Darrell L. Bock, *Putting Jesus in His Place: The Case for the Deity of Christ*
- John Dominic Crossan, *Jesus: A Revolutionary Biography*
- James D. G. Dunn, *A New Perspective on Jesus: What the Quest for the Historical Jesus Missed*
- Bart D. Ehrman, *Jesus Interrupted: Revealing the Hidden Contradictions in the Bible (And Why We Don't Know About Them)*
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Lost Christianities: The Battles for Scripture and the Faiths We Never Knew.*
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Lost Scriptures: Books that Did Not Make It into the New Testament*
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Misquoting Jesus: The Story Behind Who Changed the Bible and Why.*
- Bart D. Ehrman, Rodolphe Kasser, and Marvin Meyer, eds. *The Gospel of Judas*
- Craig A. Evans, *Fabricating Jesus: How Modern Scholars Distort the Gospels*
- Larry Hurtado, *How on Earth Did Jesus Become a God? Historical Questions about Earliest Devotion to Jesus*
- Alister McGrath, *Heresy: A History of Defending the Truth*
- R. Albert Mohler, *The Apostles Creed: Discovering Authentic Christianity in an Age of Counterfeits*
- Todd Miles, *Superheroes Can't Save You: Epic Examples of Historic Heresies.*
- Ben Witherington III, *What Have They Done with Jesus?*
- David E. Wilhite, *The Gospel According to Heretics: Discovering Orthodoxy through Early Christological Conflicts.*
- N. T. Wright, *The Challenge of Jesus*
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Judas and the Gospel of Jesus: Have We Missed the Truth about Christianity?*

D. *Personal Reflection:* Each seminar participant will prepare a personal reflection paper.

**Due December 5.**

- a. The personal reflection paper should be 3-5 double-spaced pages.
- b. Personal reflections will be presented during the last seminar meeting
- c. Reflections may be driven by the following questions:
  - i. What determines orthodoxy and heresy, and why does it matter? Why is some variation allowed, thus denominations and some variation not allowed?
  - ii. What distinguishes biblical authority, confessions of faith, systematic theology, dogma, and tradition?
  - iii. What is the nature of doctrine, theological formulation or confessions of faith, in relation to Scripture, historical moments and movements, and culture?
  - iv. How do doctrines, theology, or confessions of faith develop so that they preserve fidelity with biblical truth?
  - v. How does one apply biblical truth or theology to the apologetic task in your culture?

E. *Assigned Reading & Class Discussion*: Students are expected to read the assigned pages listed for each class period as well as the others' papers. Our class meetings will be conducted seminar-style, and all students will participate in the discussions of the readings and students' papers.

#### IX. Penalties:

*Late Work*: A late project assignment will be assessed a **10 percent penalty if it is submitted after the deadline and a 20 percent penalty after five days. No assignment will be accepted after one week past the deadline.**

*Plagiarism*: New Orleans Baptist Seminary maintains high academic standards and is not tolerant of plagiarism. If you copy another author's work and present it as your own, you will be caught, and the penalty could be failure on that assignment or the course or expulsion from the Seminary.

#### X. Grading:

Background Paper:	20%
Major Research Paper:	40%
Book Review:	20%
Personal Reflection:	10%
Reading:	<u>10%</u>
	100%

#### XI. Emergency Plan

In case of hurricane or any other emergency, go to the seminary web site for information: [www.nobts.edu](http://www.nobts.edu)

The administration will communicate information that relates to the seminary: the nature of the emergency, instructions for responses, evacuation, contingency plans, duration of the emergency, and plans to return to campus and/or resume the schedule.

Also, check Blackboard for instructions related to this class. Because this class is conducted on the Internet as well as in the classroom, there should be minimal disruption unless the emergency affects electrical power and connection to the Internet.

In any emergency, communication is important, and our best means of staying connected is through the seminary's web site and Blackboard.

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