



The Person of Christ (THEO 9403)
 New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary
 Division of Theological and Historical Studies
 Fall, 2021 Wednesdays, 8:30-11:00 a.m. (TBD)

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Office hours/coffee/lunch by
 appointment



‘...the whole knowledge of faith involves these two things, namely, the divinity of the Trinity and the humanity of Christ’ – Thomas Aquinas

I. MISSION STATEMENT

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and Leavell College prepare servants to walk with Christ, proclaim His truth, and fulfill His mission.

II. COURSE DESCRIPTION

An intensive study of the doctrine of the person of Christ is made through an analysis of the biblical data in the light of historical and contemporary interpretations. A contemporary theological understanding of the person of Christ is developed.

III. COURSE TEACHING METHODOLOGY

This course is a seminar on advanced readings in Christology. Rather than canvassing the whole sweep of Christology throughout history, our studies this term will have a special focus on select moments from the patristic, medieval, early modern and modern periods, using Thomas Aquinas in particular as a gateway into broader concerns. This course requires students to read the assigned texts carefully, take notes, and participate in critical discussion during class. As always, effort and learning go hand in hand. Since this is a research doctoral course, the discussions will be academic and aimed at a deeper apprehension of the intellectual tasks of Christology.

IV. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. *Understanding*

- Demonstrate understanding of the biblical bases, historical development, and systematic significance of Christology.
- Students should be able to communicate this doctrine in their particular ministry calling and context.

2. *Transferable skills*

- Students should show a capacity for attentive and reflective reading of ancient and modern texts.
- Students should demonstrate a capacity to analyze concepts and arguments.
- Students should demonstrate an ability to formulate arguments and articulate critical judgments, both orally and in writing.
- Students should demonstrate an ability to engage in and profit from group discussion.

V. COURSE GUIDELINES

1. ***Academic Misconduct.*** NOBTS has a no tolerance policy for plagiarism. Plagiarism in certain cases may result in expulsion from the seminary. See the NOBTS Student Handbook for definition, penalties, and policies associated with plagiarism.
2. ***Technical Assistance.*** For assistance with any matters related to technology, please consult the Information Technology Center (504-816-8180; itcsupport@nobts.edu; <https://www.nobts.edu/itc>) or the following email addresses, where relevant:
 - a. Selfserve@nobts.edu – Email for technical questions/support requests with the Selfserve.nobts.edu site (Access to online registration, financial account, online transcript, etc.)
 - b. BlackboardHelpDesk@nobts.edu – Email for technical questions/support requests with the Blackboard Learning Management System.
3. ***Assignments and Attendance.*** Assignments are not optional: to pass, students must complete all assignments and watch all the uploaded lectures. *These are minimum expectations, and do not guarantee a passing grade* – but no one has ever failed one of my classes who has turned in all their assignments and done their best.
4. ***Writing.*** NOBTS maintains a [Writing Center](#) designed to improve English writing at the graduate level. Students can receive writing guides, tips, and valuable information to help in becoming a better writer. A copy of the approved NOBTS Style Guide can be found online at [the Writing Center's page on the seminary website](#).
5. ***Technology.***¹ Digital devices are prohibited in the classroom (laptops, tablets, phones of any sort, recording devices, etc). This guideline might appear draconian, but it exists strictly for the benefit of everyone involved. Though many may feel that their use of technology makes them better, more efficient scholars, the [best research](#) says that [it does not](#). In fact, studies show that it significantly impairs your learning and [the learning of others around you](#). Taking notes by hand [improves recall](#) and apprehension, as does [reading on paper and not on screens](#). During class, phones will be completely silenced. Even then, if you are dependent on your smartphone, its mere presence – even if powered off – [has been proven to diminish your cognitive capacities](#). All that to say, we will use our short time together to practice a little technological asceticism. Computers are obviously allowed for students attending class remotely, but only to connect to

¹ I have adapted and expanded this section mostly from Prof. Alan Jacobs at Baylor University.

class.

- a. In accordance with this stipulation, you are required to have physical copies of the course texts; e-books are not allowed, and shorter readings must be printed off.
- b. Students may use all the tech they desire outside of the classroom.
- c. Recording is prohibited, as is sharing course content through any platform (like social media).

VI. REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

**Your professor will provide several shorter readings on Blackboard; see the Course Schedule (IX) below for all of the required readings.*

1. Brian Daley, *God Visible: Patristic Christology Reconsidered* (Oxford University Press, 2018).
2. Marilyn McCord Adams, *What Sort of Human Nature? Medieval Philosophy and the Systematics of Christology*. The Aquinas Lecture, 1999 (Marquette University Press, 1999).
3. Dominic Legge, *The Trinitarian Christology of St Thomas Aquinas* (Oxford University Press, 2018)
4. Michael Gorman, *Aquinas on the Metaphysics of the Hypostatic Union* (Cambridge University Press, 2017).
5. Thomas Joseph White, *The Incarnate Lord: A Thomistic Study in Christology* (Catholic University of America Press, 2015).
6. Corey L. Barnes, *Christ's Two Wills in Scholastic Thought: The Christology of Aquinas and its Historical Contexts* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 2012).
7. Oliver D. Crisp, *Divinity and Humanity* (Cambridge University Press, 2007).

VII. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- a. Reading and Participation: 30 %
- b. Research Paper: 60%
- c. Critical response: 10%

1. *Reading & Participation.*

- a. Every student is expected to lead discussion one week (with the exception of weeks 2, 4, & 5, which will be led by the professor). Sign-up is on a first come, first served basis.
- b. As a doctoral seminar, *your* careful reading and participation in the seminar discussion is essential not only for you but for everyone. Unless you take notes, our collective seminar discussions will become very quiet and dull. Take notes, write down questions that come to mind about things you don't understand, things that excite you, or things with which you disagree. These will help us create lively discussion. Generally, notes should focus on the author's main argument,

looking at how they are justifying their stances theologically and exegetically, identifying the main features of the text in question. Or notes may simply be a running commentary on the text that helps you engage in class discussion. Ask yourself the following questions as you take notes and prepare for class discussion.² These questions are good to have in mind more generally when doing research.

a. **Argument.**

- i. What is the chief argument and how is it constructed? How many discrete sections are there within the text, what's the relation between these, and how do they all add up?
- ii. What is/are the question(s) to which the argument is an answer?
- iii. Are there highlights in the argument, moments of particular weight, insight, or weakness?
- iv. What objections could be raised against it, and how might the author respond?

b. **Interpretation.**

- v. Are there aspects of the argument, or sections of it, that are difficult to understand? If so, what is the most charitable way of reading them?
- vi. Considering when this was written, are there background arguments or events that might be relevant to understanding the argument's context?

c. **Claims.**

- vii. In what ways is the argument successful, and in what ways is it unsuccessful?
- viii. Are there consequences of the argument that are unexplored or underdeveloped? Why might that be?

2. **Research paper.** The primary assignment in this class, and the chief basis for your assessment. Papers may be either historical-theological (focusing on a particular figure) or systematic-theological (focusing on a particular topic), or even exegetical. But all papers should strive to meet the standards of PhD-level research and writing. Above all, they must be well-researched, conversant with the field enough to identify an area needing further work, set forth a clearly defined thesis, substantiate it, and anticipate the most serious objections. All topics must be approved by your professor.

a. **Proposal (Sept 22).** Before writing your essay, you will submit a paper proposal to the whole class for brief discussion and feedback. The proposal must include a first draft of the following:

- i. A narrowed-down proposed topic, and the reason you would like to explore this issue.
- ii. An outline with headings, subheadings, and brief descriptions of what materials/discussions you suspect they will include.
- iii. A working bibliography of at least eight sources. Choose your sources carefully and ensure that you have enough primary sources to prevent your paper from being a distillation of or commentary on other people's

²

I have adapted these criteria from Prof. Kevin Hector at the University of Chicago.

thoughts.

- b. **Final Draft (due dates vary).** Building off of your preliminary research for your proposal, and the feedback you receive in class, you will write a full-dress version of your argument. The expectation is that it is a *final*, not *first* draft. That is, you must write it with sufficient time to review it, iron out grammatical and argumentative infelicities, and edit it for submission as a final draft. Students will present their papers as they would in a conference setting, field questions, and have opportunity to clarify their arguments.
- c. **Critical Response.** Every student will write a brief (600-800 word) critical response to their classmates' papers, to be presented on the same day that colleague presents. Hard copies should be handed to the presenter and the professor.
- d. **Corrections.** All students will have until December 6 to make any edits or corrections to their papers they feel necessary. Presenting earlier gives one more time for corrections; presenting later affords less time.
- e. **Additional Instructions:**
 - i. You should use an appropriate balance between primary and secondary sources for your paper. Do not cite any source you have not responsibly consulted.
 - ii. Your paper should be: around 6000 words (include word count on title page), which is enough space to make a focused argument that would stand a good chance of publication, if the quality is present. Papers should be double-spaced, Times New Roman font in 12-pt, and (more or less) in accordance with the Style Guide. Footnotes contribute to your total word count.
 - iii. You may *not* recycle anything you've previously written. Papers must be entirely new, written from the ground up, and *specifically for this class*.
 - iv. Every paper must have an abstract of 100-150 words, presented on a separate page between your title page and the beginning of your essay. If you find yourself unable to present the point of your paper concisely, then you don't know your own argument (indeed, you might not have one).

VIII. EVALUATION OF GRADE

1. The grading scale will follow institutional guidelines.
2. Late submissions will be docked five percent every day they are late. Please submit assignments on time. Mysterious 'problems' with an internet connection, busyness with outside responsibilities and assignments in other courses, a penchant for perfectionism, and so on, are not excuses.
3. There will not be any extra credit. Neither will there be any extension of paper length/due date, save for truly extenuating circumstances.
4. I typically err in your favor when assigning grades. If, nevertheless, you feel that I have erred entirely in assigning your grade, please take the following steps: (a) wait at least one week before taking action, and give your paper a careful re-read to see if you feel the same way; (b) keep in mind that if I reconsider your grade, that can cut both ways (I may discover that I was *too* generous the first time around); (c) as specifically as possible, set down an argument in writing as to why your grade merits reconsideration.

IX. COURSE SCHEDULE

Week Agenda

1. Aug 18 Christology and Scripture (Shapwung Valui)

- a. Bauckham, Richard, "God Crucified," in *Jesus and the God of Israel: God Crucified and Other Studies on the New Testament's Christology of Divine Identity* (Eerdmans, 2008), 1-59.
- b. Bauckham, Richard, "Markan Christology according to Richard Hays: Some Addenda," *Journal of Theological Interpretation* 11.1 (2017): 21-36.
- c. Bockmuehl, Markus, "The Presence of the Ascended Son in the Gospel of John," *Nova et Vetera* 18.4 (2020): 1302-1322.
- d. Bockmuehl, Markus, "The Dynamic Absence of Jesus in Hebrews," *Journal of Theological Studies* 70.1 (2019): 141-162.
- e. Doré, Joseph. "Christ's Consciousness," in *Encyclopedia of Christian Theology*, ed. Jean-Yves Lacoste (Routledge, 2005), 295-298.
- f. Giambrone, Anthony, "Scripture as *Scientia Christi*: Three Theses on Jesus' Self-Knowledge and the Future Course of New Testament Christology," *Pro Ecclesia* 25.3 (2016): 274-90.
- g. Jamieson, R. B. "1 Corinthians 15:28 and the Grammar of Paul's Christology," *NTS* 66 (2020):187-207.³
- h. Leim, Joshua, "Theological Hermeneutics, Exegesis, and J. R. Daniel Kirk's *A Man Attested by God*," *Journal of Theological Interpretation* 15.1 (2021): 22-43.
- i. Smith, Brandon D., "What Christ Does, God Does: Surveying Recent Scholarship on Christological Monotheism," *Currents in Biblical Research* 17 (2019): 184-208.
- j. Stevenson, Austin. "The Unity of Christ and the Historical Jesus: Aquinas and Locke on Personal Identity," *Modern Theology* (2020; early view; 14pp.).
- k. Venard, Olivier-Thomas, "Christology from the Old Testament to the New," in *The Oxford Handbook of Christology*, ed. Francesca Aran Murphy (OUP, 2015), 21-38.

2. Aug 25 Cyrillian Sources: Selections from Cyril and Maximus

- a. Cyril of Alexandria, *Scholia on the Incarnation of the Only Begotten*, in John McGuckin, *Saint Cyril of Alexandria and the Christological Controversy* (St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2004), 294-335.
- b. Maximus the Confessor, *Ambigua to Thomas* [Ambigua 1-5], in *On Difficulties in the Church Fathers: The Ambigua*, ed. and trans. Nicholas Constas (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2014), vol. 1, pp. 1-59 (only half of those pages are the English translation).
- c. Maximus, *Opuscula* 3, 7, in Andrew Louth, *Maximus the Confessor. The Early Church Fathers* (London: Routledge, 1996), 180-198.
- d. Maximus, *Opusculum* 6, in *The Cosmic Mystery of Jesus Christ: Selected Writings from St Maximus the Confessor*, trans. Paul M. Blowers and Robert Louis Wilken. PPS 25 (St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2003), 173-176.

³ See also Jamieson, *The Paradox of Sonship: Christology in the Epistle to the Hebrews*. SDDS (IVP Academic, 2021).

- e. Maximus, *Ad Thalassium* 21, in St. Maximos the Confessor, *On Difficulties in Sacred Scripture: The Responses to Thalassios*, trans. Maximos Constas. FOC 136 (Catholic University of America Press, 2018), 143-149.
- f. Louth, Andrew. *Maximus the Confessor*. The Early Church Fathers (London: Routledge, 1996), 48-62.
- g. McFarland, Ian. "Willing Is Not Choosing': Some Anthropological Implications of Dyothelite Christology," *IJST* 9.1 (2007): 3-23.
- h. Blowers, Paul M., "Maximus the Confessor and John of Damascus on Gnostic Will (γνώμη) in Christ: Clarity and Ambiguity," *Union Seminary Quarterly Review* 63 (2012), 44-50.
- i. Hovorun, Cyril, "Maximus, a Cautious Neo-Chalcedonian," in *The Oxford Handbook to Maximus the Confessor*, ed. Pauline Allen and Bronwen Neil (Oxford University Press, 2015), 106-124.

3. Sept 1 (Connor Hinton)

- a. Brian Daley, *God Visible: Patristic Christology Reconsidered* (OUP, 2018)

4. Sept 8 Medieval Christology and Thomas Aquinas

- a. Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* IIIa.1.1-3; IIIa.2.1-4; IIIa.9; IIIa.15; IIIa.16.1; IIIa.17.2; IIIa.18-19
- b. Wawrywow, Joseph, "The Christology of Thomas Aquinas in its Scholastic Context," in *The Oxford Handbook of Christology*, ed. Francesca Aran Murphy (OUP, 2015), 233-249.
- c. Marilyn McCord Adams, *What Sort of Human Nature? Medieval Philosophy and the Systematics of Christology*. The Aquinas Lecture, 1999 (Marquette University Press, 1999).

5. Sept 15 Early Modern and Modern Reformed Christology

- a. Francis Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology* 13.3-9 (2:299-334), 13.11-16 (2:340-364), 14.2 (2:379-384), 14.18 (2:494-499).
- b. Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Christian Faith: A New Translation and Critical Edition*, 2 vols., trans. Terrence N. Tice, Catherine L. Kelsey, and Edwina Lawler, ed. Kelsey and Tice (WJK, 2016), §§93-99 (2:565-621).
- c. Davidson, Ivor J., "Christ," in *The Oxford Handbook of Reformed Theology*, ed. Scott R. Swain and Michael Allen (OUP, 2020), 446-472.
- d. Mariña, Jacqueline, "Christology and Anthropology in Friedrich Schleiermacher," in *The Cambridge Companion to Friedrich Schleiermacher*, ed. Jacqueline Mariña (CUP, 2005), 151-170.

6. Sept 22 (Nick Holder)

- a. Dominic Legge, *The Trinitarian Christology of St Thomas Aquinas* (Oxford University Press, 2018)

7. Sept 29 (Casey Evans)

- a. Michael Gorman, *Aquinas on the Metaphysics of the Hypostatic Union* (Cambridge University Press, 2017).

8. Oct 6 (Will Collins)

- a. Thomas Joseph White, *The Incarnate Lord: A Thomistic Study in Christology* (Catholic University of America Press, 2015).

9. Oct 13 (Joshua Hagans)

- a. Corey L. Barnes, *Christ's Two Wills in Scholastic Thought: The Christology of Aquinas and its Historical Contexts* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2012).

10. Oct 20 (Corbin Smith)

- a. Oliver D. Crisp, *Divinity and Humanity* (Cambridge University Press, 2007).

11. Oct 27 Paper Presentations

- a. Shapwung Valui
- b. TBA

12. Nov 3 Paper Presentations

- a. Joshua Hagans
- b. Casey Evans

13. Nov 10 Paper Presentations

- a. Nick Holder
- b. Connor Hinton

14. Nov 17 No Class / Research Day (ETS/SBLAAR)

15. Dec 1 Paper Presentations

- a. Will Collins
- b. Corbin Smith

X. SHORT BIBLIOGRAPHY

In addition to the required texts and readings listed above, the following are recommended sources.

Evans, C. Stephen. *The Historical Christ and the Jesus of Faith: The Incarnational Narrative as History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996.

Gondreau, Paul. *The Passions of Christ's Soul in the Theology of St. Thomas Aquinas*. University of Scranton Press, 2009; reprinted Providence, RI: Cluny Media, 2018.

Grillmeier, Aloys. *Christ in Christian Tradition*. Vol. 1, *From the Apostolic Age to Chalcedon (451)*. Louisville, KY: WJK, 1965. And other volumes in the series (some of which are co-authored).

Mapping Modern Theology: A Thematic and Historical Introduction, edited by Kelly M. Kapic and Bruce L. McCormack. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2012.

McFarland, Ian A. *The Word Made Flesh: A Theology of the Incarnation*. Louisville, KY: WJK, 2019.

New Dictionary of Theology: Historical and Systematic, 2nd ed. Edited by Martive Davie, et al. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2016.

Oakes, Edward T. *Infinity Dwindled to Infancy: A Catholic and Evangelical Christology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2011.

O'Collins, Gerald. *Christology: A Biblical, Historical, and Systematic Study of Jesus*, 2nd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.

The Oxford Handbook of Systematic Theology, edited by John Webster, Kathryn Tanner, and Iain Torrance. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Religion Past and Present, edited by Hans Dieter Betz, Don Browning, Bernd Janowski, and Eberhard Jüngel. 14 volumes. Leiden: Brill, 2006-2013.

Riches, Aaron. *Ecce Homo: On the Divine Unity of Christ*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2016.

Wellum, Stephen. *God the Son Incarnate: The Doctrine of Christ*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016.