**THEO-318-01 Systematic Theology I: Theology, God, Anthropology, Christology, Soteriology**

Heath 103

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**VANGUARD UNIVERSITY**

**I. TEXTBOOKS:**

Kazoh Kitamori, *Theology of the Pain of God* (Wipf & Stock, 2005).

Frank D. Macchia, *Jesus the Spirit Baptizer: Christology in Light of Pentecost* (Eerdmans, 2018).

Matthew W. Bates, *Salvation by Allegiance Alone: Rethinking Faith, Works, and the Gospel of Jesus the King* (Baker Academic, 2017).

**II. COURSE DESCRIPTION**: Using Scripture and the church’s historic theological wisdom, this course is a study of God’s nature, the Trinity, creation, humankind as Imago Dei, the fall, Jesus Christ’s person and salvific work, and the elements of salvation including justification, sanctification and glorification. Core requirement for the religion major offered every semester.

**III. COURSE OBJECTIVES:** Explore: 1) theological method and scripture as theological issues; 2) the existence of God and God’s nature, including attributes and Triune identity; 3) a basic grasp of theological anthropology; 4) thoroughly cover Christology and salvation.

**IV. ASSIGNMENTS:**

1. Three Papers:
2. Read Kitamori’s, *Theology of the Pain of God*. Then write a six-page paper on the book. Make it a book review. Imagine writing a review of this book for the college group of your church, in which you are enthused about summarizing its basic thoughts to them. Spend about five pages summarizing the major argument of this book as substantially as possible. Then spend a page evaluating Kitamori’s argument. What was especially compelling about his argument and why? What is less than clear or in need of elaboration, and why? What question or questions did the book provoke? Explain why this question is important to his discussion. **Due Sept. 22nd (posted on canvas by midnight). See paper rubric below.**
3. Read the Introduction and then chapters 3, 4, and 5 of Professor Macchia’s book, *Jesus the Spirit Baptizer* (leaving out chapters 1, 2, and 6). As with the first paper, write a six-page review of the three assigned chapters. Naturally, there is a lot of material in these chapters! All that you can do is a “big picture” review in which you look at the overarching argument and a relatively brief explanation of how the individual components or sections fit into it. Though a bird’s eye view, I don’t want your review to be superficial. I still want you to be as detailed as you can be in describing things. Don’t just skim the surface. Dig in a little; give your readers something to bite into. Spend five pages summarizing the big ideas of chapters 3 to 5 and one page discussing what was most important to you in this reading (and why) as well as what lingering questions these chapters raised for you (something that was less than clear to you or in need of some elaboration). Due **Oct. 27th (posted on canvas by midnight). See paper rubric below.**
4. Read Bates’ *Salvation by Allegiance Alone*. As with the previous two papers, imagine writing a review of this book for the college group of your church, in which you are enthused about summarizing the basic thoughts of this book to them. Spend about five pages summarizing the major argument of this book as substantially as possible. Then spend a page evaluating Bates’s argument. What was especially compelling about his argument and why? What is less than clear or in need of elaboration, and why? What question or questions did the book provoke? Explain why this question is important to his discussion. **Due Nov. 24th** **(posted on canvas by midnight). See paper rubric below.**

**NO LATE PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED!**

**Rubric for all three papers**. An “A” paper will have these qualities (maximum 300 pts. per paper):

Clarity and logical flow: 75 pts.

Papers must be clearly written with an introduction defining the major issue of the paper and how the student will go about explaining it. Throughout the paper, should be one major thought per paragraph and a logical flow of thoughts moving from one paragraph to the next (and so on, through to the end of the paper). It helps to start each paragraph with a transitional sentence that connects the thought of the previous paragraph with the thought of the paragraph following. Then close with a brief but impactful conclusion where a concluding thought is left to the reader that sums it all up nicely (their “take home” idea that the student doesn’t want them to forget).

Overall accuracy: 75 pts.

The student’s presentation of the authors’ views should accurately represent their expressed arguments. What the student says about these views should be based solidly on what the authors actually say. The attempt should be made to avoid reading implications into an author’s thinking that have no explicit support in their statements.

Substance of the summaries: 100 pts.

This category gets the most points. It’s the most important. **The student’s summaries of the authors’ views should be substantial**, with sufficient detail to grant the reader a fairly thorough grasp of the book’s ideas. **Avoid “fluff!”** “Fluff” fills paragraphs with superficial sentences (e.g., vague opinions or unimportant/ vaguely related information). Save opinions or applications for the evaluation section at the end of the paper! “Fluff” can also filled with randomly-selected minor points from the book while major points go unnoticed, revealing a hasty and superficial read of the book. Spend enough time with your book to avoid “fluff!” Rather, the summaries of the authors’ ideas should focus on major points and be dense with information drawn from these points. Avoid lengthy quotes; students should favor putting matters in their own words. Shorter quotes are fine though. The summary section concentrates on a fair, accurate, and richly detailed explanation of an author’s views. Of course, six or seven pages is not much space for summarizing an entire book. So, the student must be concise and selective, only focusing on the most important points that deal directly with the major issue or question of the book (look at how I summarize this major question at the start of each paper description above). But the student should still try to be as substantial as possible within page number limits. If you must go over that limit, you may do so. But not too far beyond.

Probing nature of the evaluations: 50 pts.

Students should spend quality time thinking about the evaluative section at the end of the paper. This is the part that is most neglected by students, but it shouldn’t be. This is where the student’s own voice can be heard on the topic! If the student values their voice, they will not rush this part of the paper. But the student should seek to avoid going off into areas unrelated to the book. It’s allowed to raise issues unaddressed by the book that arguably should have been covered by an author given what they did have to say. But when evaluating, also try to emphasize points raised in the book. Why are they important? How do they apply to the church today? Why were they unclear? What further questions can be raised?

**Also:** All three papers should be double spaced with a no. 12 font. There is no need to use footnotes, since the entire paper is based on only one source. Simply put the page number in parentheses to reference the source of a major idea or a quote. If multiple thoughts or quotes in a single paragraph come from the same page (in succession), the student can simply put “Ibid” in parentheses after the original reference. When starting a new paragraph, however, reference the page number in parenthesis, even if it’s the same as the last reference of the previous paragraph. This will help the reader, because they will not have to look beyond a single paragraph to find out what an “Ibid” means!

1. **Class Notes:**

STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO ATTEND ALL LECTURES. The lectures will be brief enough to allow for discussions of the issues. If anything is unclear in the lecture, that will be the time to raise the issue. Students will attempt to make their class notes as thorough as possible. After each session, while their memory is still fresh, students should enhance their notes so as to include as much explanation as possible. At the end of the semester, students will submit their notes on canvas. A **maximum** of 100 pts will be awarded for them. **Due Dec. 8th by midnight on canvas**.

Notes that receive 100 pts will:

1. Be well organized, with the date and the major topic of each session clearly displayed above each section.
2. Be thorough in description and explanation. Unexplained bullet points or terse statements will not receive full credit.
3. Be clear and accurate in explanation, revealing a very good grasp of the concepts.
4. Highlight concepts that were especially enlightening or new. Some kind of brief response from the student in such cases will be a plus.
5. Include a question now and then in cases where an issue is still unclear to some extent.

These notes will remain a valuable resource for students in the future, a valuable guide to key doctrines of the Christian faith!

**V. Lecture Calendar:**

Topic 1: Theological Method and God (“Text and Context,” Trinity, Existence, Attributes): Aug. 24th to

Sept. 29nd. (**Kitamori paper due on** **Sept. 22nd** by midnight on canvas).

Topic 2: Christology (Incarnation, Life, Death, and Resurrection): Oct. 6th to Oct. 27th (**Macchia paper**

**due on** **Oct. 27th**).

Topic 3: Anthropology and Soteriology: (Election, justification, regeneration and sanctification, and

glorification) Nov. 3rd to Nov. 24th (**Bates paper due on Nov. 24th** by midnight on canvas).

**Lecture notes due Dec. 8th by midnight on canvas.** After Thanksgiving, students will concentrate on preparing lecture notes for submission on Dec. 8th and we will have time to explore together a few topics that are not generally included in the theological curriculum, including lingering questions students may have.

**VI. Final Evaluation:**

**Paper 1** (*Kitamori*): **300 pts.** Due September 22nd (by midnight on canvas).

**Paper 2** (*Macchia*): **300 pts.** Due October 27th (by midnight on canvas).

**Paper 3**: (*Bates*): **300 pts**. Due November 24th (by midnight on canvas).

**Class notes**: **100 pts.** Due December 8th (by midnight on canvas).

**Total: 1000 pts.**

**Zoom Courtesy:**

Please dress appropriately for the zoom session. Dress as you would coming to class.

Please do not be lying down during the session; use proper decorum.

Please be sure you’re muted during the session so that we do not get your background noise.

Please make sure your video is on so that I can see your face during the session (if you don’t have a computer camera, please email me to let me know so that I know the reason for your dark square on the screen.

Please be logged on before the session is scheduled to begin.