



# On-Campus Course Syllabus

## THS 665 L1

### Modern and Postmodern Theology

### Spring 2023

#### Class Information

**Day and Time:** Monday, 4:45 – 7:15

**Room Number:** E209

#### Contact Information

**Instructor Name:** Dr. Ty Kieser

**Instructor Email:** [tkieser@criswell.edu](mailto:tkieser@criswell.edu)

**Instructor Phone:** Office: (214) 818-1306; Cell: (309) 573-6624

**Instructor Office Hours:** Tues 12–2 PM; Thurs 8:30–9:30; 11–12; Mon/Thurs 4:15-4:45

Sign up [here](#)

#### Course Description and Prerequisites

An examination of the development of major theological perspectives from the rise of the Enlightenment to the present time. Attention is given to modernist and postmodernist theology in their major forms as well as major developments within evangelical theology, including varied reactions to the changing theological landscape

#### Course Objectives

At the end of the course, the student should be able to:

1. Identify key figures, events, ideas, and movements pertaining to the Christian church from the Enlightenment to today.
2. Narrate the significance of modern and postmodern thought on contemporary theology in American evangelicalism and global Christianity
3. Charitably analyze theological readings from the Christian tradition and contemporary scholarship.
4. Posit historical and theological claims with nuance, clarity, charity, and coherence.

#### Required Textbooks

Bonhoeffer, Dietrich. *Discipleship*. DBWE, Vol. 4. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003 (9780800683245).

Greenman, Jeffrey P., and Gene L. Green. *Global Theology in Evangelical Perspective: Exploring the Contextual Nature of Theology and Mission*. Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2012 (9780830869701).

- Johnson, Keith L. *The Essential Karl Barth: A Reader and Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2019 (9781493416998).
- Jones, Serene. *Feminist Theory and Christian Theology: Cartographies of Grace*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000 (9780800626945).
- Kidd, Thomas S. *Who Is an Evangelical?: The History of a Movement in Crisis*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019 (9780300249040).
- Kierkegaard, Soren. *The Sickness unto Death: A Christian Psychological Exposition of Edification and Awakening by Anti-Climacus*. London: Penguin, 1989 (9780140445336).
- Moltmann, Jürgen. *The Crucified God*. 40th Anniversary ed. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2015 (9781506402963).
- Treier, Daniel J., and Walter A. Elwell. *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*. 3rd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2017. Digital copy available free through the library: <https://search-ebscohost-com.criswellcollege.idm.oclc.org/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=2471134&site=ehost-live>  
= EDT in the course schedule

## Recommended Reading

- Hector, Kevin. *The Theological Project of Modernism: Faith and the Conditions of Mineness*, OSAT. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015.
- Kapic, Kelly M. and Bruce L. McCormack. *Mapping Modern Theology: A Thematic and Historical Introduction*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012.
- Schwarz, Hans. *Theology in a Global Context: The Last Two Hundred Years*. Eerdmans, 2005.

## Course Requirements and Assignments

**Theses and Participation** (40%—about 3 pts/class): Our class discussions will be guided by short theses submitted by every student. Engaging with the readings, these theses are intended to aid your understanding of the text and to bring clarity and organization to our discussion of that text. We will read at least one primary text, sometimes three or four.

Students should submit 2–3 theses total (≈150–300 words total) based on the readings to Canvas by 4 PM on the day of class (with the exception of the 1<sup>st</sup> day, when no theses are due). Every day I will collect, distill, and select certain theses to be the framing theses for class discussion. Your grade is based on the theses you submit, not only the ones selected. However, I reserve the right to grade theses up/down on the basis of class engagement. See below for greater specification and some examples.

**Exams** (30% total; 15% each): There will be open book/note essay exams that covers each half of the semester. Each exam will be an analysis of key quotes from that half of the semester.

\*Open-book/note does NOT mean that these should be shared/discussed with other students.

**Theological Dialogue Paper** (30% total; 5 pts + 25 pts): This 3,000–4,000 word paper<sup>1</sup> will compare and contrast two theologians within modern/postmodern theology. You will submit an outline of the paper (5%), detailing (A) the theme/question of your paper, (B) the two figures that you will engage, (C) 3 additional primary sources, (D) 3 secondary sources, and (E) a tentative thesis of the paper and of each section. The dialogue itself will contain two sections: (1) a dialogue between your two figures (≈2,500 words) and then (2) your own evaluation of the question at hand (≈1,500 words).

## Course/Classroom Policies and Information

**Late work:** For exams and papers, your grade will be reduced by 10% for each calendar day late. However, any missed assignment may be submitted end of the semester for up to 50% credit.

**Technology:** Cell phones should *not* be used during class time. Additionally, laptops inherently have several negative consequences on classes that prioritize discussion.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, it is my strong preference that resources provided digitally are printed out or found in hard copy. However, I recognize that there are potential difficulties to this process and that computers have several advantages. Therefore, computers may be allowed under the condition that they are used properly. However, I reserve the right to deduct grades for misuse of any technology or designate particular periods of time as laptop-free.

**Reading:** I have a “5 hour rule,” whereby if you have not completed the reading in 5 hours (of very focused attention), you are permitted to put the book down. This is intended to prevent you from being overworked and to train you in reading wisely. You will have to learn how to skim certain sections, how to read other sections very carefully, and how to tell the difference. I did some of this for you by placing some chapters of whole texts in bold and/or noting especially significant chapters.

## Class Attendance

Students are responsible for enrolling in courses for which they anticipate being able to attend every class session on the day and time appearing on course schedules, and then making every effort to do so. When unavoidable situations result in absence or tardiness, students are responsible for acquiring any information missed. Instructors are not obliged to allow students to make up missed work. Per their independent discretion, individual instructors may determine how attendance affects students’ ability to meet course learning objectives and whether attendance affects course grades.

## Campus Closure

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<sup>1</sup> This does NOT include footnotes or bibliography. Hard word count requirements are +/- 10% — every percentage over/under 10% accrues a proportionate deduction (e.g., a paper that is 15% too long is penalized 5% of the paper grade).

<sup>2</sup> In addition to the potentially distracting nature of computers for the user and their neighbors, the negative consequences can include the following adverse effects: (A) Interpersonally: they create a physical barrier between humans in dialogue. (B) Mentally: your brain does not function as sharply when it is subconsciously aware that you could access the answer in two seconds with less effort than you could by simply thinking; plus you more quickly forget the content retrieved this effort-less way (see *Make it Stick*; *The Shallows: What the Internet is Doing to Our Brains*; “Is Google Making Us Stupid?”). (C) Teleologically: computers inherently prioritize efficiency; whereas a discussion is a gradual process oriented toward intellectual formation (and, therefore, is often superficially inefficient).

To ensure the health and safety of students and employees, college administrators may decide it is necessary on rare occasions to close the campus. Once this decision is announced, instructors will contact students to provide further details regarding the campus closure's impact on those courses. Students are responsible to watch for communication from their instructors and respond appropriately. (Unless otherwise specified by the instructor in this syllabus, this communication will be sent to the student's Criswell College e-mail account.)

In order to make progress toward the courses' objectives, instructors have the freedom during most campus closures to require students to participate in activities as alternatives to meeting on campus. An instructor may, for example, hold class remotely (through Zoom) at the scheduled time, provide a recording of a class or presentation for students to watch independently, or assign other activities that students are to accomplish before returning to campus. Students are responsible for accomplishing these alternative activities as well as any course requirements listed in this syllabus during the period of the campus closure. If, during the period of the campus closure, personal circumstances prohibit a student from accomplishing these alternative activities or course requirements and assignment listed in the syllabus during the campus closure, the student is responsible for communicating with the instructor as soon as possible. Instructors will not penalize students who do not have the means to accomplish the alternative activities during the period of the campus's closure and will work with students whose circumstances during the campus closure prohibited their timely completion of course requirements and assignments in the syllabus.

## Grading Scale

A	93-100	4.0 grade points per semester hour
A-	90-92	3.7 grade points per semester hour
B+	87-89	3.3 grade points per semester hour
B	83-86	3.0 grade points per semester hour
B-	80-82	2.7 grade points per semester hour
C+	77-79	2.3 grade points per semester hour
C	73-76	2.0 grade points per semester hour
C-	70-72	1.7 grade points per semester hour
D+	67-69	1.3 grade points per semester hour
D	63-66	1.0 grade point per semester hour
D-	60-62	0.7 grade points per semester hour
F	0-59	0.0 grade points per semester hour

## Incomplete Grades

Students requesting a grade of Incomplete (I) must understand that incomplete grades may be given only upon approval of the faculty member involved. An "I" may be assigned only when a student is currently passing a course and in situations involving extended illness, serious injury, death in the family, or employment or government reassignment, not student neglect.

Students are responsible for contacting their instructors prior to the end of the semester, plus filing the appropriate completed and approved academic request form with the Registrar's Office. The "I" must be

removed (by completing the remaining course requirements) no later than 60 calendar days after the close of the term or semester in which the grade was awarded, or the “I” will become an “F.”

## **Academic Honesty**

Absolute truth is an essential belief and basis of behavior for those who believe in a God who cannot lie and forbids falsehood. Academic honesty is the application of the principle of truth in the classroom setting. Academic honesty includes the basic premise that all work submitted by students must be their own and any ideas derived or copied from elsewhere must be carefully documented.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to:

- cheating of any kind,
- submitting, without proper approval, work originally prepared by the student for another course,
- plagiarism, which is the submitting of work prepared by someone else as if it were his own, and
- failing to credit sources properly in written work.

## **Institutional Assessment**

Material submitted by students in this course may be used for assessment of the college’s academic programs. Since programmatic and institutional assessment is done without reference to specific students, the results of these assessments have no effect on a student’s course grade or academic standing at the college. Before submitting a student’s work for this type of assessment, the course instructor redacts the work to remove anything that identifies the student.

## **Institutional Email Policy**

All official college email communications to students enrolled in this course will be sent exclusively to students’ institutional email accounts. Students are expected to check their student email accounts regularly and to respond in an appropriate and timely manner to all communications from faculty and administrative departments.

Students are permitted to setup automatic forwarding of emails from their student email accounts to one or more personal email accounts. The student is responsible to setup and maintain email forwarding without assistance from college staff. If a student chooses to use this forwarding option, he/she will continue to be responsible for responding appropriately to all communications from faculty and administrative departments of the college. Criswell College bears no responsibility for the use of emails that have been forwarded from student email accounts to other email accounts.

## **Disabilities**

Criswell College recognizes and supports the standards set forth in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, and similar state laws, which are designed to eliminate discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities. Criswell College is committed to making reasonable accommodations for qualifying students, faculty, and employees with disabilities as required by applicable laws. For more information, please contact the Student Services Office.

## **Intellectual Property Rights**

Unless otherwise specifically instructed in writing by the instructor, students must neither materially nor digitally reproduce materials from any course offered by Criswell College for or with the significant possibility of distribution.

## Resources and Supports

Canvas and SONIS: Criswell College uses Canvas as its web-based learning tool and SONIS for student data. Students needing assistance with Canvas should contact the Canvas Help Support line at (844) 358-6140. Tech support is available at this number, twenty-four hours a day. Students needing help with SONIS should contact the Campus Software Manager at [studenttechsupport@criswell.edu](mailto:studenttechsupport@criswell.edu).

Student Services: The Student Services Office exists to foster and encourage success in all areas of life—physical, intellectual, spiritual, social, and emotional. Students are encouraged to reach out for assistance by contacting the office at 214.818.1332 or [studentservices@criswell.edu](mailto:studentservices@criswell.edu). The Student Services Office also works with local counseling centers to ensure that every student has access to helpful mental health resources. More information is located on the college website at [Criswell College Mental Health Resources](#), and students may contact the Director of Student Services if they have any questions.

Wallace Library: Students can access academic resources and obtain research assistance by contacting or visiting the Wallace Library, which is located on campus. For more information, email the Wallace Library at [library@criswell.edu](mailto:library@criswell.edu). Offsite login information is available in Canvas in the “Criswell Student Training Course” under “Library Information.”

Tutoring Center: Students are encouraged to consult with tutors to improve and enhance their skills and confidence in any subject matter taught at the college. Tutors have been recommended by the faculty to ensure that the tutor(s) are qualified to serve the student body. Every tutor brings experience and expertise in an effort to provide the proper resources for the subject matter at hand. To consult with a tutor, students can visit the Tutoring Center located on the second floor in room E203, or schedule an appointment by emailing [tutoringcenter@criswell.edu](mailto:tutoringcenter@criswell.edu) or by calling 214.818.1373.

## Course Outline/Calendar

### Introduction to Class & Revivals in the 18<sup>th</sup> c.

Jan 23 — Knowing God in a “Enlightened World”

Read: EDT, “Edwards, Jonathan”

Read: EDT, “Great Awakenings”

Read: EDT, “Wesley, John”

Read: Edwards, *Religious Affections*, 127–190 [[link](#)]

### Modern Philosophy

Jan 30 — Knowing (in general)

Read: EDT, “Kant, Immanuel”

Read: EDT, “Hume, David”

Read: EDT, “Descartes, René”

Read: Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit* (104–19) [pdf]

Read: Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, “Preface to the Second Edition 1787,” [\[link\]](#)

Assignment: Theses

#### Feb 6 – Knowing God in Faith

Read: EDT, “Schleiermacher, Friedrich Daniel Ernst”

Read: EDT, “Kierkegaard, Søren”

Read: Schleiermacher, *Christian Faith*, 1:8–27 [pdf]

Read: Kierkegaard, *Sickness Unto Death*, **part 1**, part 2 (including appendixes)

Assignment: Theses

## Modern Theology

#### Feb 13 – Knowing God in History and Culture

Read: EDT, “Liberalism, Theological”

Read: EDT, “Harnack, Adolf von”

Read: EDT, “Tillich, Paul”

Read: EDT, “Harnack, Adolf von”

Read: “Harnack/Barth Debate”f [pdf]

Read: Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, 1:47–68 [pdf]

Read: Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, 2:118–38 [pdf]

Read: Tillich, “The Problem of Theological Method”

Assignment: Theses

#### Feb 20 – Knowing God in Christ

Read: EDT, “Barth, Karl”

Read: EDT, “Brunner, Heinrich Emil”

Read: Johnson, *Essential Karl Barth*, Chs. **2, 3, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 18, 19, 23, 24, 26, 32**

Assignment: Theses

#### Feb 27 – Knowing God in Crisis

Read: EDT, “Bonhoeffer, Dietrich”

Read: EDT, “Barmen, Declaration of”

Read: EDT, “German Christians”

Read: Bonhoeffer, *Discipleship*, Chs. **1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6**

Assignment: Theses

#### March 6 – Knowing God in the Church

Read: EDT, “Roman Catholicism”

Read: EDT, “Orthodox Tradition”

Read: EDT, “Balthasar, Hans Urs von”

Read: EDT, “Lonergan, Bernard Joseph Francis”  
Read: EDT, “Newman, John Henry”  
Read: EDT, “Nouvelle Théologie”  
Read: EDT, “Neo-Thomism”  
Read: EDT, “Philokalia”  
Read: De Lubac, *Catholicism* [pdf]  
Read: Vatican II, “Lumen Gentium,” [\[link\]](#)  
Read: Louth, “The Eastern Orthodox Tradition” (183–96) [dig.]  
Read: Zizioulas, *Communion and Otherness* [pdf]  
Read: Rahner, “Anonymous Christians,” 390–98 [pdf]  
Assignment: Theses  
Assignment: Exam #1 (due 10<sup>th</sup> at 11:59 pm)

March 13 – Spring Break

## **Postmodern Theology**

March 20 – Knowing God and Particularity  
Read: EDT, “Postmodernism”  
Read: EDT, “Postliberal Theology”  
Read: Vanhoozer, *Drama of Doctrine* [pdf]  
Read: Frei, *Eclipse of Biblical Narrative* [pdf]  
Read: Derrida, “Signature, Event, Context” [pdf]  
Read: Kelsey, “The Bible and Christian Theology” (385–402) [pdf]  
Assignment: Theses

March 27 – Knowing God in Suffering  
Read: EDT, “Asian Theology”  
Read: EDT, “Political Theology”  
Read: Moltmann, *Crucified God*, Chs. 6, 7, 8  
Read: Koyama, *Three Mile an Hour God* [pdf]  
Assignment: Theses  
Assignment: Sketch of Dialogue Paper (due on March 31<sup>st</sup> at 11:59 PM)

April 3 – Knowing God in Liberation  
Read: EDT, “Postcolonial Theory”  
Read: EDT, “Black Theology”  
Read: EDT, “Liberation Theology”  
Read: EDT, “Latin American Theology”  
Read: Cone, “Who is Jesus Christ Today” [pdf]  
Read: Gutierrez, *Theology of Liberation* [pdf]  
Read: Jennings, *After Whiteness* [pdf]  
Assignment: Theses



April 10 – Knowing God and Sex/Gender

Read: EDT, “Feminist Theology”

Read: EDT, “Feminism, Christian”

Read: EDT, “Gender”

Read: Jones, *Feminist Theory and Christian Theology* (esp. chs. 2 & 5)

Assignment: Theses

## **Contemporary Theology**

April 17 – Knowing God and Nature

Read: EDT, “Science and Theology”

Read: EDT, “Scientific Creationism”

Read: EDT, “Creation and Evolution”

Read: EDT, “Scopes Trial”

Read: Plantinga, *Where the Conflict Really Lies* [pdf]

Read: A reading (≈ 20 pages) of your choice from “theologies of \_\_\_\_\_” (e.g., finitude, disability, gender, sexuality, time, sport, race, economics, art, music, science, technology, etc.)

Read: Collins, *The Language of God* [pdf]

Assignment: Theses (make ≥ 1 thesis about your selected reading and their potential contribution)

April 24 – Knowing God and the Spirit

Read: EDT, “Pentecostalism”

Read: EDT, “Charismatic Movement”

Read: EDT, “Tongues, Speaking in”

Read: Green, “Then Their Eyes Were Opened” [pdf]

Read: *Global Theology in Evangelical Perspective*, introduction–chapter 5 (esp. chs. 1, 4, 5)

Assignment: Theses (make ≥ 1 thesis about Pentecostalism)

May 1 – Knowing God across the Globe

Read: EDT, “African Theology”

Read: EDT, “Asian American Theology”

Read: EDT, “Chinese Theology”

Read: EDT, “Contextualization”

Read: EDT, “World View”

Read: *Global Theology in Evangelical Perspective*, chapter 6–chapter 15 (esp. chs. 12, 13, 14)

Assignment: Theses

May 8 – Knowing God in the Gospel

Read: EDT, “Evangelicalism”

Read: EDT, “Lausanne Covenant”

Read: EDT, “Fundamentalism”

Read: Kidd, *Who is an Evangelical?*

Assignment: Theses

Assignment: Exam #2 (due May 13<sup>th</sup> at 11:59 PM)

Assignment: Dialogue Paper (due May 13<sup>th</sup> at 11:59 PM)

## Theses Details

### Genres of Theses

1. Explication: Provide clarity of interpretation and/or synthesis of a particular theme/claim in the reading. The goal here is to bring clarity to our understanding of the text.
2. Evaluation: Make a judgement on the truthfulness/coherence/biblical-rootedness/historical-precedence of a claim.
3. Extension: Illustrate the potential applied value a claim in relation to another discussion or context.
4. Enquiry: Ask a pointed question that seeks to find clarity, coherence, or significance in the text.

### Example theses on John 1

[Explication – main claim in bold, support follows] **The language of “Word of God” connects the doctrine of revelation in John 1 and the filial theme of “sonship,” reinforcing the intimate relationship of the Word and God and thereby the validity of Jesus’ revelation of the Father.** Even when John is addressing the theme of light (likely indicating revelation), he moves to an articulation of soteriological adoption (1:12) that “he gives” (v. 12c) when they “receive him” (v. 12a)—foreshadowing the adoption of sons and daughters in the Son that is flushed out in Ephesians 1. Second, again in the context of the revelation of glory that is seen by the people (v. 14b) and that brings truth, John describes Christ as the “only Son from the Father.” Here, the intimacy of the Father and Son recalls the intimacy of the “Word” and “God” in 1:1. Finally, the one who makes the invisible God “known” is the one “at the Father’s side” and (some manuscripts say) “the only Son.”

[Evaluation] **The Johannine prologue, and whole gospel, attend to the humanity of Christ in continuity with the synoptic gospels,** even though John is often perceived to be focused on the exalted status of Jesus in tension with the low-christological claims of the synoptics. In the prologue, Jesus bears human flesh (1:14), he is born in time (1:15), and he is announced by John as the sacrificial lamb (1:29). Throughout the gospel Jesus does ordinary human things: does the will of the Father (6:38), asks for a drink (4:6-7), thirsts (19:28). He also shares in human emotional experiences: he weeps (11:35); feels sorrow (11:33–35), and his soul is troubled (13:21). This is in continuity with, not contrast to, the presentations of Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

[Extension] **Christ’s accurate revelation of God on the basis of his intimate relationship with the Father, as testified to in John 1, addresses and corrects the frequent insecurity with the Father’s love for many of us modern Christians.** Many modern Christians reflect the sentiment, “Jesus loves me, but God I’m not so sure about.” However, the gospel of John and the prologue in particular articulate the intimacy of Christ’s relationship with the Father in order to express the accuracy of his revelation of God. John 14:9 expresses Jesus as the image of the Father to the degree that if we have seen Jesus, we have seen the Father. Likewise, John 1:18 says that “no one has seen God” yet Jesus has “made him known.” As such, the character and action of

Jesus reflect of the character and action of the Father. We need not be unsure about the Father's love or relationship to us because we know of Jesus' love and relationship toward us.

[Enquiry] **Does the conjunction of verse 18a (“no one has ever seen God”) and verse 1c (“the Word was God”) signal a “contradictory Christology,” such that our human reasoning about the hypostatic union necessarily results in an antinomy?** If the Word is *homoousia* with the Father (whom no one has seen, nor could see), then how can the Word make God known (1:18d)? You might say, “he make him known in his visible humanity (see 1 John 1),” yet on such an account the Word would seemingly only be revealing that which is expressible in human form and not the “eternal, immortal, invisible” God (1 Tim 1:17).

Other examples might include a comparison of a quote in the reading with a passage of Scripture (e.g., “Augustine’s account of \_\_\_\_\_ might be considered a reflection on X biblical text”), the provision of an illustrative analogy (e.g., “Augustine’s account of \_\_\_\_\_ might be illustrated by Y analogy”).

### Theses Rubric

Theses will be graded on their attention to the text, clarity of the claim, and evidence provided in its defense (understanding the limitation of space/words). See the rubric in Canvas. Most basically, a sub-par thesis is one that could have been written without reading the text, a good thesis reflects a careful reading of the text, and a superior thesis shows close engagement with the text and incisive reflection, causing us all to think and to *look at the text*.

## **Principles of Good Seminar Discussions**

### Principle of Charity

Charitably relate to each other: Loving the Lord and your neighbor is our ultimate goal. In 10 years you might not remember the content of these discussions, but you might remember how others treated you.

Charitably disagree and question: Civil disagreement is a good thing when done charitably. It helps us understand each other and the topic. However, when you think you disagree, first seek to understand. If someone says something, consider it in the best possible light.

Phrases to use: Any genuine compliment. “When you say \_\_\_\_\_, do you mean \_\_\_\_\_, or \_\_\_\_\_, or something else?”

### Principle of Curiosity

Curiously engage the topic: Seek to understand. Assume that we have something to learn from this discussion.

Curiously seek truth: This is a journey of intellectual formation toward truth, not merely an intellectual exercise.

Phrases to use: “Help me understand \_\_\_\_\_.” “How does \_\_\_\_\_ work with the author’s earlier claim to \_\_\_\_\_?”

### Principle of Collaboration

Collaboratively speak: Building off of what has come before and not interjecting clever thoughts 30 minutes after we moved on from the topic.

Collaboratively include: Every one is included in the conversation. It is not a two-person, dialogue, series of monologs, or a sustained Q & A with the professor.

Collaboratively listen: Listen well to classmates. Do not interrupt.

Phrases to use: "Like Sue said, \_\_\_\_\_. I might add, \_\_\_\_\_ for further support." "Sue, what do you think about adding \_\_\_\_\_ to your list?"

### Principle of Courage

Courageously speak up: Some of us need the courage to share our opinion with others. Please do! We will all benefit when you do.

Courageously stake a claim: Make the strongest defensible claim you can. It's easier to describe than evaluate, but be courageous. Make a claim and defend it (always in accordance with the previous principles.).

Courageously boast in weakness (see 2 Cor 12): Admit we do not know everything. Admit we are wrong.

Phrases to use: "I do not know." "I was wrong about \_\_\_\_\_." "I think \_\_\_\_\_ is true."

## Characteristics of a Good Paper

**Sharp:** A good paper is clear, nuanced, and well organized. It has an identifiable thesis that is supported throughout the paper. Each of the sections work well together. Papers that are not clear, evidence thinking that is not clear. So, strive to write clearly.

Helpful exercise: Print a draft of your paper, highlight the main thesis and the main claims of each section [and if you cannot find them, write them]. Revise these repeatedly. Ask yourself how the highlighted texts relate; ask yourself if the unhighlighted text supports the highlighted text.

**Supported:** A good paper is well supported with evidence from the primary source. The evidence is "support" for the author's thesis, so it should be summarized well and not over-quoted. A well-supported paper might "play defense" as well as offense and consider potential objections to its claims.

Helpful exercise: Consider what claims are "necessary" for your project to "work" and how they flow together. If you have material that is not necessary, cut it. If you cannot think of what is needed to make it "work," then you probably have a topic not a thesis.

**Significant:** A good paper is significant for theological and devotional thought. While your paper does not need to "contribute" to academic scholarship, a good thesis is not obvious to everyone nor agreed to by everyone. For example, saying, "justification and sanctification are related" is not very significant (because few dispute that claim), but saying that "justification and sanctification are only related insofar as they are both effects of union

with Christ” is significant—because it disagrees with many people who more closely align the two doctrines. Further, the implications of the thesis should be attended to and made clear to some degree.

Helpful exercise: Consider the alternatives to your theses. Are those alternatives commonly held by theologians/church-people? Are they interesting? If you cannot think of alternatives, or they are uninteresting, keep revising your thesis.

## **Dialogue Paper details**

### Necessary Paper Details to Include in Month-Prior Submission

Specific topic:

Specific Theologians engaged:

Anticipated additional sources to include: (name at least three primary sources and three secondary sources)

Working Thesis: (of your concluding section)

Working outline: (of your concluding section)

\*I recognize that papers morph as you write them. Therefore, you are not obligated to retain every detail in your final draft. However, if there are substantial changes (e.g., a new theme), please let me know.

This assignment presents two sides of a theological discussion introduced within this time period as though it were a transcribed dialogue between Christians on both sides defending their position. This should not simply be quotes from both sides stacked against each other, but should be an articulation of these positions in the readings. You should imagine yourself as the moderator and your specific theologians as the dialogue partners.

Example dialogue topics—feel free to develop your own and/or specify the question further:

- Edwards and Wesley on the nature of revival
- Kant and Hegel on knowledge of God
- Kierkegaard and Graham on faith
- Barth and Warfield\* on Scripture
- Barth and Schleiermacher on the nature of dogmatics
- Schleiermacher and Marva Dawn\* on demons
- Tillich and Niebuhr\* on Christ and culture
- Zizioulas and Yong on the nature of the Holy Spirit
- Moltmann and Bavinck\* on impassibility
- Cone and Bruce Fields\* on black liberation
- Daly\* and Bonhoeffer on gender and sin
- Jones and Trueman\* on sexuality
- Padilla DeBorst and Walls on the nature of missions
- Harnack and Beale on Biblical Theology
- Kidd and Larson\* on Evangelicalism

\*note that we do not read several of these figures in class together. That is totally acceptable. So long as the theologians are from within this time period and the topic is relevant to modern/postmodern theology, you have near limitless freedom of choice.

**For example**, you might place John Murray and Barth in dialogue about the role of faith in baptism.

[intro]. . .

**Ty**: Now that we've gotten introductions out of the way, why don't we start with your definitions of what baptism is?

**Barth**: I believe that baptism is the human act of obedience in response to the faithfulness of God; therefore, requiring humans to be able to take responsibility and enact that obedience (CD IV/4, 101)—actions that infants are not yet capable of (CD IV/4, 165).

. . .

**Murray**: But, Dr. Barth, if God exercises his love in freedom (as you suggest), then it seems as though you have as much power to bring yourself to faith as an infant has to bring herself to the waters of baptism, making baptism most fitting for infants.

. . .

**Evaluation**: While Warfield point about \_\_\_\_\_ is valuable because of \_\_\_\_\_, I side with Barth's claim \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_ . . . .