



AMBROSE SEMINARY

Foundations for Ministry Certificate Program

Theology in the Time of Pandemic

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Online: Thursdays, February 25, March 4, 11, 18, and 25, for 2 hours each session; a video link will be provided.

Live: Deer Park Church, Monday evenings at 7:00, February 22, March 1, 8, 15, 22, for 2 hours.

Course Description

What do the classical themes of Christian theology have to offer in response to the real world challenges that we have been -- and are -- facing in 2020 and 2021? Drawing on traditional Christian sources, this course will explore practical applications of Christian doctrine to our present context, and provide opportunities for discussing contemporary issues in the light of the history of Christian thought.

Course Outline

- 1a. Revelation: Encountering God
- 1b. Despair: Living in the dark
- 2a. Christology: The mind of Christ
- 2b. Responding like Christ to questions of race
- 3a. Is there an Alliance Doctrine of the Trinity?
- 3b. Does the church have any response to the challenge of polarization?
- 4a. Creation and the Image of God within Humanity
- 4b. Overwhelmed with change
- 5a. Theological Method: Doing theology within our Communities
- 5b. Is there any way to think theologically about burnout?

Course Assignments – All due by 30 April 2021

1. Attend/watch all five class sessions.

2. Read at least 100 pages on the topic of Christian theology. You will need to email the instructor and let him know what book you are considering (described below), or for a recommendation, depending on your Discussion Project topic.

3. The Discussion Project
 1. Choose a feature length magazine (or online) article on any topic that you have found interesting from the beginning of 2020 to the present and read it.
 2. Take some time and reflect on how God, and his great act to save in Jesus Christ, are a part of that story, and a part of your response to it as a Christian.
 3. Do your reading here: read 100 pages from a Christian theology book that you think would help you process the things you are thinking about. Please email me ahead of time just to confirm your choice; I love to find out about new books and ideas I haven't read before. And I am glad to give a recommendation too, but the finding of a good book to read can itself be a part of the journey.
 4. Call up two friends, and have coffee/Zoom/jogging/whatever you like best with them, and talk about your topic, both the content in the article and why you find it interesting, and also how you think God is a part of that story and of your response. Ask them what they think. See if you can really get them thinking.
 5. Write a nice summary (including a link to the original article) of your topic, the way you have been thinking about it, and how your conversations went. Post that thoughtful and reflective summary (say, a couple pages long), to our group Basecamp in the "Discussion Projects" file.
 6. Read and leave thoughtful comments on two other projects that are in that file. (It only counts if you are one of the first two commenters . . . to make sure everybody gets to be a part.) And be sure to respond to the others that have commented on your project.

4. Send your instructor an email, and tell me how it went. How was the reading? How were the discussions? How did the online interaction go? How did the whole process make you feel, or how did it affect your thoughts? And any other feedback.

All of these items need to be completed by 30 April, so that I can get grades back to Ambrose in time, so plan accordingly, but it is not designed to be a burden. 😊

Tips

Video tip: The videos will be online until the end of June if you want to re-watch a section.

Questions tip: If you have a question, please post it in the "Questions and Answers" section on our class Basecamp or email it in to the instructor. If a particularly thorny one comes up, we'll try to address it in a subsequent video.