

The Theology of Friedrich Schleiermacher

TH 2726

Fall 2016

Fellowship Hall, Caldwell Chapel

Wednesday, 1:30-4:20 pm

Instructor: Christopher Elwood
Gardencourt 216, x 383
celwood@lpts.edu

Course Description:

This course examines central ideas and principal themes in the work of one of the most influential of modern theologians, F. D. E. Schleiermacher. Schleiermacher is often credited as the founder of modern Protestant theology, a figure of decisive importance in an effort to reconceive the nature of religion and of the task of theological thinking in the wake of Enlightenment challenges to traditional Christian belief. He was a regular preacher, a church leader, a philosopher and theologian; he originated the field of hermeneutics and helped to found the University of Berlin. His broad contributions to the intellectual, cultural, and religious life of his time were extraordinary and demonstrate his fundamental commitment to the integration of faith, critical reflection, and public practice. In this course, students will read principally from Schleiermacher's sermons, his *Speeches*, and *The Christian Faith* in order to grasp and critically engage Schleiermacher's interpretation of religion as a constitutive element of human experience, his definition of theology as a positive science, and the structure and constructive proposals of his dogmatic theology.

Students taking this course should have completed Introduction to Theology and Ethics (ITE/FQI) and at least one semester of the History of Christian Experience.

Goals and Objectives:

The goal of the course is to help students develop their capacity for faithful and coherent theological expression in pastoral practice.

Students will

- gain a basic understanding of the theology of Schleiermacher in the context of his times and in relation to theological traditions and debates that preceded and followed his lifetime,
- sharpen their skills of theological interpretation through the close reading and discussion of primary sources, orally and in writing,
- develop an ability to make responsible and relevant use of historic theological writing,
- clarify their own theological and ethical positions.

Required Texts:

- F. Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith*, ed. H. R. Mackintosh and J. S. Stewart (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 2000), (*Apocryphile*, 2011).
- F. Schleiermacher, *On Religion: Speeches to its Cultured Despisers*, trans. John Oman (Westminster John Knox Press, 1994), (*Beloved*, 2015).

Recommended Text:

- B. A. Gerrish, *A Prince of the Church* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), (*Wipf & Stock*, 2001).

On Library Reserve:

Barth, Karl. *The Theology of Schleiermacher*. Eerdmans, 1982.

Clements, Keith. *Schleiermacher: Pioneer of Modern Theology*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991.

De Vries, Dawn. *Jesus Christ in the Preaching of Calvin and Schleiermacher*. WJK, 1996.

De Vries, Dawn, ed. *Servant of the Word: Selected Sermons*. Fortress, 1988.

Duke, James O., and Robert F. Streetman, ed. *Barth and Schleiermacher: Beyond the Impasse?* Fortress, 1988.

Gerrish, B.A. *The Old Protestantism and the New*. University of Chicago, 1982.
Tice, Terrence, ed. *Brief Outline of Theology*. Third edition. WJK, 2011.
Verheyden, J., ed. *The Life of Jesus*. Trans. S. M. Gilmour. Fortress, 1975.
Welch, Claude, *Protestant Thought in the Nineteenth Century*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972.
Wilson, Mary F., ed. *Selected Sermons of Schleiermacher*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1890.

Requirements:

1. *Course engagement*: Thorough preparation for class and active, thoughtful participation in discussion is a basic requirement of the course. Attendance is mandatory. Students will submit a one-paragraph self-assessment of their course engagement, including a grade, in the conclusion of their theological journal (see 3, below). The following is a rough guide to letter grade assignment: A = completed 95-100% of the reading prior to class discussion, with critical reflection, and engaged thoughtfully and with respect for others in class exchanges; B = completed 85% ...; C = completed 75% ... Grades should be lowered appropriately for unexcused absences, tardiness, leaving class early, in-class texting or other forms of non-participation. The instructor reserves the right to adjust the reported grade when necessary. (about 20%)

2. *Essays*: two short essays (1500-1900 words, double spaced, Times New Roman 12-pt font) on Schleiermacher's theological thought (see descriptions and due dates below). Save your essay as a Word document and name it in this way: "**Yourlastname Schleiermacher essay 1**," with the essay number corresponding to the number given in the syllabus. (about 50%)

3. *A dialogical exercise: How Schleiermacher Changed My Mind*. Keep a theological journal throughout the semester to document your critical and contextual engagement with Schleiermacher's theology, your conversations with classmates and others about theological issues raised in the course, and your reflections on your own developing theological and ethical understanding. Your journals and your oral reflection on them will be the basis for a concluding conversation ("final exam") held December 14 or 15. Completed journals are due December 15. (about 30%)

All required written work should be submitted, electronically, to the instructor's email inbox.

Short Essay Assignments:

Students must write two theological essays, due on October 10 and November 21.

1. For the first essay the topic is assigned: *Schleiermacher's understanding of the social and historical character of religion. Can a person be religious in solitude? How are different religious communities distinguished and related to each other?*
2. For the second essay you may choose the topic. You are encouraged to consult with the instructor as you are making this choice. Some possibilities:
 - a. *Providence: How does Schleiermacher's view of causality help (or not) with issues and concerns about suffering and evil?*
 - b. *Schleiermacher's christology: Who is Jesus in Schleiermacher's theological reading? How does his christology relate to, draw on, or deviate from some classical Christian traditions of interpretation? Give your critical assessment of Schleiermacher's interpretations.*
 - c. *Schleiermacher's theology and preaching: Take a sermon and give us a "thick interpretation" of it, demonstrating the doctrinal points Schleiermacher is making through it. How does the form of the sermon and preaching convey the meaning you believe he intends? Is it successful? How/why or why not?*

The essays will observe conventions of academic writing. Students needing help with citation, voice, development of argument, or other aspects of writing style, should consult with the Academic Support Center within the first two weeks of the semester.

Evaluation of written work: Your instructor will read your essay and return it with comments and a letter grade. The grading policy of Louisville Seminary will be followed. Evaluation will focus on the student's progress toward developing the understanding and capacities given in the course objectives and will assess the relative degree of success in meeting the following goals:

- Correct formatting: the essay should have a title (on page one; no title page); it should be formatted according to the supplied directions, submitted in the form required, and should be the required length.
- Strong writing: the essay should observe correct grammatical forms, correct use of punctuation, and avoid syntactical and other errors of writing; the writing should be clear and comprehensible, employing a structure that aids in communication, and should utilize effective transitions; sources should be clearly and correctly cited, following approved methods and forms.
- Addressing the topic as a historical theologian: the essay should successfully address the essay prompt; it should focus on the identified theological issues and discuss them with attention to appropriate elements of context: time, place, culture, social and/or political location.
- Concentrating on primary sources: the essay should focus on the text or texts identified as a primary source for the engagement of the essay topic and should avoid unnecessary distractions or detours.
- Achieving clarity of theological or ethical understanding: the essay should focus on a theological or ethical issue, give adequate voice to the theological or ethical position of the author or authors central to the essay topic (invariably, in this class, John Calvin), and show that the student understands the issues and can interpret the pertinent ideas thoughtfully with attention to their coherence and their ramifications.
- Growth in one's capacity for theological engagement: the essay should demonstrate the student's developing capacity for theological interpretation and assessment, supplying a framework for theological engagement that is supported by evidence and argument, and displaying the student's own emerging, distinctive theological and ethical voice.

N.B. In order to pass the course, students must complete and submit all assigned work.

Citation Policy:

Citations in your papers should follow the Seminary standard, which is based on these guides:

- Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 7th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007.
- *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 15th ed. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2003.

Copies of these guides are available at the library and in the Academic Support Center. Please contact

Academic Honesty:

All work turned in to the instructor is expected to be the work of the student whose name appears on the assignment. Any borrowing of the ideas or the words of others must be acknowledged by quotation marks (where appropriate) and by citation of author and source. Use of another's language or ideas from online resources is included in this policy, and must be attributed to author and source of the work being cited. Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism, and may result in failure of the course. Two occurrences of plagiarism may result in dismissal from the Seminary. Students unfamiliar with issues related to academic honesty can find help from the staff in the Academic Support Center. For the Seminary policy, see the Policy for Academic Honesty in the Student Handbook.

Accessibility and Accommodation:

Students requiring accommodations for a documented physical or learning disability should be in contact with the Director of the Academic Support Center during the first two weeks of a semester (or before the semester begins) and should speak with the instructor as soon as possible to arrange appropriate adjustments. Students with environmental or other sensitivities that may affect their learning are also encouraged to speak with the instructor.

Inclusive Language:

In accordance with seminary policy, students are to use inclusive language in class discussions and in written and oral communication by using language representative of the whole human community in respect to gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, and physical and intellectual capacities. Direct

quotations from theological texts and translations of the Bible do not have to be altered to conform to this policy. In your own writing, however, when referring to God, you are encouraged to use a variety of images and metaphors, reflecting the richness of the Bible's images for God. For more information, see <http://www.lpts.edu/academics/academic-resources/academic-support-center/online-writing-lab/avoiding-gender-bias>.

Policy on late work:

All written assignments are due, unless indicated otherwise, by 11:59 pm on the date given in the syllabus. Students who encounter unusual obstacles to getting an assignment in may ask for an extension of the due date. They should contact the instructor to request an extension before the work comes due. They may speak to the instructor directly, but they are required to communicate by email so as to provide a record of the request. Extensions are granted solely at the discretion of the instructor. Assignments submitted late, when no extension has been granted, will be penalized in the grading by one letter grade increment for every day (a B+ paper becomes a B if one day late, a B- if two days, a C+ if three days, etc.). Assignments submitted more than ten days after the due date will not be accepted.

Use of electronic devices in class:

Do not send or read text messages during class. Cell phones should be turned off. In the event that you have a legitimate need to be accessible during class, you may ask the instructor for an exception to this rule. Laptops should not be used if you cannot trust yourself to restrict your use to note-taking and referring to the assigned primary source readings for the day. You may not access the Internet during class time unless specifically for purposes directly relevant to the course. Any misuse of electronic devices during class time, including checking of email or social networking sites will negatively affect the course grade.

Attendance Policy:

According to the Seminary catalog, students are expected to attend class meetings regularly. In case of illness or emergency, students are asked to notify the instructor of their planned absence from class, either prior to the session or within 24 hours of the class session. Six or more absences (1/4 of the course) may result in a low or failing grade in the course.

Contacting the instructor:

While students are always welcome to speak to the instructor at any time about questions or issues that arise, the most reliable and efficient means of setting up an opportunity to meet and talk over important matters is through email. Students are strongly encouraged to contact the professor when they feel they need clarification on topics and questions that arise in the class, or when they are confronting significant challenges in their learning.

Calendar of Topics and Assignments:

A note on the calendar: What is given here is a very rough estimate of dates for the topics we will be taking up. It is aspirational rather than a mandatory schedule. The class will not be bound by this schedule, as we will seek to give each topic its due, in relation to the needs of teaching and learning that arise in the classroom.

- September 14: *Introduction to the Course: Schleiermacher in his time and ours*
 Gerrish, *A Prince of the Church*
 Sermon: "On Prayer in Jesus' Name," in Dawn De Vries, ed. *Servant of the Word*, pp. 169-180
- Recommended:
 Keith Clements, "Schleiermacher in his Context," in *Schleiermacher: Pioneer of Modern Theology*
- September 21: *The Essence of Religion**
 Speeches: First Speech, Second Speech
- Recommended:
 The Christian Faith § 3-4
 Keith Clements, "Main Themes in Schleiermacher's Theology" in *Schleiermacher: Pioneer of Modern Theology*
- September 28: *The Manifestation of Religion**
 Speeches: Third Speech (119-128, 132-133), Fourth Speech, Fifth Speech (210-218, 234-253)
- Recommended:
 The Christian Faith § 6
 Keith Clements, "Main Themes in Schleiermacher's Theology," in *Schleiermacher: Pioneer of Modern Theology*
- October 5: *Preaching**
 Sermon: "A Nation's Duty in a War for Freedom," in *Selected Sermons of Schleiermacher*, trans. Mary F. Wilson
 (<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schleiermach/sermons.iv.iii.html>)
 Sermon: "Sermon at Nathanael's Grave," in Dawn De Vries, ed. *Servant of the Word*, pp. 209-214
 Fourth Speech, 147-152
 Brief Outline of the Study of Theology §§ 280-289 (pp. 105-109)
 Dawn DeVries, "Introduction: Schleiermacher as Preacher," in *Servant of the Word*, pp. 1-23
- October 10 **Essay 1 due**
- October 12: *Theology and the God-World Relation**
 Brief Outline of the Study of Theology (trans. **T. Tice**) §§ 1-31 (pp. 1-14); §§ 196-208 (pp. 73-78)
 The Christian Faith § 15 (pp. 76-78), §§ 30-31 (pp. 125-128), § 35 (pp. 140-141), § 38 (pp. 146-148), § 46-47 (pp. 170-184)
- Recommended:
 B.A. Gerrish, "The Task of Theology," in Gerrish, *Tradition and the Modern World*, pp. 13-48
 Claude Welch, *Protestant Thought in the Nineteenth Century*, vol. 1, pp. 68-76

- October 17-21: Research and Study Week
- October 26: *God and World**
The Christian Faith § 50.1-2 (pp. 194-196), § 52 (pp. 203-206), § 54 (pp. 211-219), § 57 (pp. 233-236), §§ 60-61.4 (pp. 244-252)
Sermon: "The Power of Prayer in Relation to Outward Circumstances," in *Selected Sermons*, pp. 38-51
(<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schleiermach/sermons.iv.i.html>)
- Recommended:
Claude Welch, *Protestant Thought in the Nineteenth Century*, vol. 1, pp. 76-81
- November 2: *Sin and Grace**
The Christian Faith (§§ 62-85); Focus: § 66 (pp. 271-273), § 68.3 (pp. 278-279), §§ 70-71 (pp. 282-291), § 73 (pp. 304-306), § 75.2-3 (pp. 316-317), §§ 77-78 (pp. 320-324), § 80 (pp. 326-330), § 81.2-3 (pp. 333-337), § 82.2 (pp. 339-340), § 83 (pp. 341-345)
- Recommended:
Sermon: "The Wrath of God," in *Servant of the Word*
Claude Welch, *Protestant Thought in the Nineteenth Century*, vol. 1, pp. 81-85
- November 9: *Jesus Christ**
The Christian Faith (§§ 13, 86-105); Focus: § 88 (pp. 361-365), §§ 92-94 (pp. 374-389), § 98 (pp. 413-417), §§ 100-101 (pp. 425-438), § 104.4-5 (pp. 457-465)
Sermon: "The Redeemer: Both Human and Divine," in *Servant of the Word*
Sermon: "Witnesses to the Resurrection," in *Servant of the Word*
- Recommended:
The Life of Jesus, pp. 36-44, 81-87
Dawn DeVries, "Schleiermacher's Sermons on the Synoptic Gospels," in *Jesus Christ in the Preaching of Calvin and Schleiermacher*
- November 16: *Christ and the Soul**
The Christian Faith (§§ 106-112; just read through section headings)
Sermon: "The Effects of Scripture and the Immediate Effects of the Redeemer," in *Servant of the Word*
- November 21: **Essay 2 due**
- November 24-25: Thanksgiving Break (*no class November 23*)
- November 30: *Election and the Holy Spirit**
The Christian Faith (§§ 113-125); Focus: § 113 (pp. 525-528), § 116 (pp. 533-536), § 119 (pp. 546-551), §§ 121-125 (pp. 560-581)
Sermon: "Necessity of the New Birth," in *Selected Sermons*, pp. 83-102
(<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schleiermach/sermons.iv.iv.html>)
- December 7: *The Church and Conclusions to our Work**
The Christian Faith (§§ 126-147, [§§ 148-156], §§ 157-172); Focus: §§ 126-129 (582-596), § 130.2 (598-600), §§ 133-134 (611-617), §§ 157-158 (pp. 696-703), § 163 (pp. 717-722), §§ 165-169 (pp. 726-737)

Sermon: "Our Community: Founded and Preserved through the Redeemer's Love," in *Servant of the Word*

Recommended:

Sermon: "Christ's Promise to the Thief on the Cross," in *Servant of the Word*

Sermon: "On Prayer in Jesus' Name," in *Servant of the Word*

Karl Barth, "Concluding Unscientific Postscript on Schleiermacher," in Barth, *The Theology of Schleiermacher*, pp. 261-279

B. A. Gerrish, "Theology within the Limits of Piety Alone: Schleiermacher and Calvin's Notion of God," in Gerrish, *The Old Protestantism and the New*, pp. 196-207

Richard R. Niebuhr, "Christ, Nature, and Consciousness: Reflections on Schleiermacher in the Light of Barth's Early Criticisms," in James O. Duke and Robert F. Streetman, ed. *Barth and Schleiermacher: Beyond the Impasse?* pp. 23-42

December 14 or 15: Final exam

Select Bibliography

I. Schleiermacher's works in English translation

- Brief Outline of Theology as a Field of Study*, ed. T. Tice (Mellen, 1988)
Christian Caring: Selections from Practical Theology, ed. Duke and Stone (Fortress, 1988)
The Christian Faith, ed. Mackintosh and Stewart (T&T Clark, 1928)
The Christian Faith, ed. Tice and Kelsey (WJK, 2016)
The Christian Household, ed. Seidel and Tice (Mellen, 1991)
Christmas Eve: Dialogue on the Incarnation, ed. Tice (Mellen, 1990)
Dialectics: Or the Art of Doing Philosophy, ed. Tice (Scholars Press, 1996)
Hermeneutics and Criticism, ed. A. Bowie (Cambridge, 1998)
Hermeneutics: The Handwritten Manuscripts, ed. Kimmerle (Scholars, 1986)
Introduction to Christian Ethics, ed. Shelley (Abingdon, 1989)
Lectures on Philosophical Ethics, ed. R. Louden (Cambridge, 2002)
The Life of Jesus, ed. J. Verheyden, trans. S. M. Gilmour (Fortress, 1975)
On the Glaubenslehre: Two Letters to Dr. Lücke, ed. Duke and Fiorenza (Scholars, 1981)
On the Highest Good, ed. Stoese (Mellen, 1992)
On Freedom, ed. A. Blackwell (Mellen, 1992)
On Religion: Speeches to Its Cultured Despisers, trans. Oman (WJK, reprint 1994)
On Religion: Speeches to Its Cultured Despisers, trans. Crouter (1799 edition; Cambridge, 1989)
On What Gives Value to Life, ed. Lawler and Tice (Mellen, 1995)
Selected Sermons, ed. M. Wilson (1890)
Servant of the Word: Selected Sermons, ed. De Vries (Fortress, 1988)
Soliloquies (Hyperion, 1984)

II. Background and context

- Gerrish, B.A., *Tradition and the Modern World*
Livingston, J.C., *Modern Christian Thought*, vol. 1
Marty, Martin, ed. *A Handbook of Christian Theologians*
Reardon, B.M.G., *Religion in the Age of Romanticism*
Smart, Ninian, et al., ed., *Nineteenth Century Religious Thought in the West*
Welch, Claude, *Protestant Theology in the Nineteenth Century*

III. General introductions to or studies of Schleiermacher's life and thought

- Barth, Karl, *The Theology of Schleiermacher*
Niebuhr, Richard R., *Schleiermacher on Christ and Religion*
Redeker, Martin, *Schleiermacher: Life and Thought*
Rowan, Frederica, ed., *The Life of Schleiermacher as Unfolded in his Autobiography and Letters*
Sykes, Stephen, *Friedrich Schleiermacher*

IV. Some specialized studies

- Blackwell, Albert, *Schleiermacher's Early Philosophy of Life*
Brandt, James M., *All Things New: Reform of Church and Society in S's Christian Ethics*
Brandt, R., *The Philosophy of Schleiermacher*
Capetz, Paul E., *Christian Faith as Religion: A Study in the Theologies of Calvin and Schleiermacher*
De Vries, Dawn, *Jesus Christ in the Preaching of Calvin and Schleiermacher*
Duke and Streetman, ed., *Barth and Schleiermacher: Beyond the Impasse?*
Forstman, Jack, *A Romantic Triangle: Schleiermacher and Early German Romanticism*
Guenther-Gleason, Elizabeth, *On Schleiermacher and Gender Politics*
Kelsey, Catherine, *Thinking about Christ with Schleiermacher*
Nicol, Iain, ed., *Schleiermacher and Feminism*
Spiegler, Gerhard, *The Eternal Covenant: Schleiermacher's Experiment in Cultural Theology*

Sykes, Stephen, *The Identity of Christianity*

Thandeka, *The Embodied Self: Friedrich Schleiermacher's Solution to Kant's Problem of the Empirical Self*

Williams, Robert R., *Schleiermacher the Theologian: The Construction of the Doctrine of God*

V. Bibliography

Tice, Terrence, *Schleiermacher Bibliography (1784-1984)*

Tice, Terrence, *Schleiermacher's Sermons: A Chronological Listing and Account*