

Christian Life Educators Network (CLEN) is a global network of independent Bible schools, faculty and students headquartered in Columbus, GA. Together CLEN and CLST Global offer cutting edge theological education that is uniquely designed to meet the educational and training needs demanded by today's leaders.

It is difficult to imagine anything that undermines the redemptive impact of Christian faith more than the lack of integrity, when we say we believe one thing and our actions reveal a different set of values altogether. In this final essay, I want to revisit the theme of faithful living in light of the message of Jesus by returning once more to the classic story Jesus told in response to a lawyer asking him about eternal life in Luke. What do you read there? What must we do to inherit eternal life? What must we do to live? How do we live? How do we serve life? Jesus Christ shows us with clarity what God is like and what God wants from human beings. God is the merciful God of life who seeks to heal a hurting creation and human beings have the vocation of joining God in this work. If we confess Jesus as our savior and king, we are saying we want to align ourselves with his hierarchy of values. We are saying something definitive about our own identity. The task of theology is to help us understand and live with integrity with this identity. What do we value the most? What does shape what we do? To what do we devote our best energies and resources? He highlights the extraction of untold natural wealth, generally with devastating consequences on the environment. He closes the book with a great, and deeply distressing irony. The bounty that has been taken from the ground in the Great Plains, worth billions of dollars, has been replaced with billions of dollars worth of buried nuclear weapons and their delivery systems. Quite a trade-off, irreplaceable natural beauty and life-systems replaced with systems whose only purpose is to destroy life. Part of doing theology is self-awareness. As we better understand what our actual gods are, as we bring these gods to the surface, we then will be able to revise, adjust, and correct. By being more self-aware we will be able to transform our theology into the actual theology we want, that we believe will help us serve life. The appropriate analogy is not one of looking in a card catalogue in a library and having the comfortable space to decide without pressure which book we want to look at. Rather, the analogy is more the old county fair with the various barkers in the midway all vying for our attention, making promises, seeking more than anything to separate us from our money but to make us think we are happy about them doing so. As Paul writes in Romans, these various principalities and powers actively seek to separate us from God 8: And they are pretty powerful in their allure. However, the Bible also tells us that the main power these idols have is deception. The lawyer asks Jesus the question: Eternal here has to do with quality. How do we live life as it is meant to be lived? How do we fulfill our purpose? How do we best do this? This is the question. Jesus makes like Socrates here. What do you think? The lawyer is ready. He summarizes Torah in a nutshell. Do this and live. This answer the lawyer gives and Jesus affirms actually is a pretty rich and complicated statement. The issue here is life itself. The meaning of life, our place in life. The question about eternal life looms about as big and basic as any theological question a person could ask. Jesus shows great respect for this lawyer. Torah speaks to life, not just to legalistic rules and regulations about behavior. Torah is not mainly about an external toeing the line. Torah is about our very relationship with God. Torah is about the quality of life, our purposes and destiny. The writer of Psalm We too easily separate law and love and with tragic consequences. We end up with loveless law and lawless love. Law becomes about power and retribution and has no soul. Love becomes about feelings and self-gratification and has no social embodiment. But Torah, in its truest meaning, speaks to hearts. Torah speaks a word of love. We see the centrality of love from the very beginning when the commandments are first given to Moses in Exodus. Leviticus 19 also emphasizes the centrality of love in portraying the law: I am the Lord. Certainly not in an external, coercive sense. Our following commands works best when we want to, not when we feel forced. Love must come from the heart. We only know how to love because we have been loved. God made what is out of love and continues to enliven it. And this love is defined by the message of Jesus. Jesus and the lawyer are on the same page. Torah equals love which equals life. But then the lawyer presses on. He tests Jesus further. The lawyer recognizes that the clearest test of our love for God is our love for our neighbor. Possibly, if the lawyer is like we are much of the time and if his

culture was anything like ours, he would think of neighbor as limited to those inside his own circle of friends. The neighbor would be one like ourselves—life and love are to be given to me and mine, alone. When the lawyer asks who the neighbor is, Jesus makes another pedagogical move. Rather than a direct answer, he tells a story. And what a story! He tells of a man being brutally robbed on the road to Jericho and then saved by a Samaritan. They could imagine being mugged and left for dead—and they would shudder. Then they would shudder again as they imagined the priest and Levite passing them by—those damn hypocrites! They should be helping! After hours of dozens of cars speeding by heedless to my troubles someone finally stops. A Beaver, for crying out loud! Years ago, I heard a radio preacher talking about his car breaking down on the way to the airport. He had a hard time getting someone to stop, too, until finally a hippie van pulls over and helps him out. It would have been a bit more palatable if the beaten man were a Samaritan and the hero a regular Jew like the lawyer. But Jesus genuinely turned things upside-down to make his point. And the lawyer realizes this. The one who shows mercy is the neighbor. He is the one who shows what it takes to inherit eternal life, even if he is a Samaritan. Showing mercy—that is what God wants. That is what God is like. So, in the end, theology is about how we live more than about our ideas or dogmas. Love God; that is, love your neighbor; that is, act with transformative mercy toward anyone in need, most especially your enemies. If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. If you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

Chapter 2 : Biblical Theology | Christian Life School of Theology Global and CLEN

Since , Christian Life School of Theology Global has served thousands of churches and tens of thousands of students world-wide! CLST Global is the world leader in customized, church-based theological education programs and resources.

A Theology of the Letters to Timothy and Titus: At his first coming, Jesus brought salvation 2 Tim 1: Throughout his letters to Timothy and Titus, Paul provides instructions for proper conduct in the church and in the lives of individual believers 1 Tim 3: Virtues and Vices In their emphasis on the vital significance of ethics and virtues in the Christian life, the letters to Timothy and Titus make an important contribution to Pauline theology and to the theology of the New Testament. In the context of a world that was often characterized by evil and corruption, Christians would stand out starkly as they pursued a life of virtue, integrity, and love. In that vein, both Timothy and Titus are urged to serve as examples for those under their spiritual care 1 Tim 4: Virtue lists are found in 1 Tim 4: The message is clear: Believers are to be devoted to the pursuit of a series of Christian virtues as part of their Christian discipleship while avoiding a slew of vices characteristic of those in the world who live apart from God, including instruments of the devil. What, then, are some of the preeminent virtues extolled by Paul in these letters? Love The pride of place belongs to the virtue of love. Believers are to love strangers but not money 1 Tim 3: Faith and Faithfulness Another virtue Paul stresses in his letters to Timothy and Titus is faithfulness. Faithfulness is the virtue of being able to be trusted, of being reliable in carrying out a task or mission. This calls for humility. The world, even the scholarly world, prizes innovation and fresh ideas; God is looking for those who are willing to submit themselves to the gospel God has already given. Thus, the gospel is a sacred stewardship with which we have been entrusted; this calls for humble, quiet faithfulness. Godliness Godliness was a virtue also in the Greco-Roman world where it referred to religious piety the Latin word is pietas. The OT features comparable vocabulary only in the book of Proverbs and Isaiah. He urges Timothy to pursue spiritual discipline and godliness which, unlike mere physical discipline, holds promise in both the present life and the life to come 1 Tim 4: Self-Control A closely related virtue is that of self-control. This is a way of thinking and living we should seek to cultivate in young people, and it is way of thinking and living that should characterize more experienced Christians as well. It encompasses and describes a sensible life-style lived according to the values and within the plan of God. At times, however, the focus may be more on activities Christians ought to pursue, whether going on a short-term mission trip nothing wrong with that, of course , reading the Bible certainly vital, especially if we are doers of the Word and not hearers only, Jas 1: In this regard, the letters to Timothy and Titus make a vital contribution. For any true disciple of Christ, Paul urges, what is paramount is growth in godly character, resulting in the performance of a variety of good works e. How does one grow in such virtues? The way you make progress in these areas is by pursuing a series of virtues such as love, faithfulness, godliness, and self-control in your own personal life aided by the Spirit of God as well as in community with others, especially in your church. No matter where you are in your growth in Christian maturity, remember this: No one is perfect, and all of us are sinful; and yet, because of our relationship with God in Christ, we each have the Holy Spirit living inside of us who is eager to help us become more like Christ as we continue to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God:

Chapter 3 : Christian Life School of Theology Global Online

*The Doctrine of the Christian Life (A Theology of Lordship) [John M. Frame] on calendrierdelascience.com *FREE* shipping on qualifying offers. The third volume of Frame's Theology of Lordship series, this book focuses on biblical ethics, presenting a method for ethical decision-making.*

The Christian concept of the Messiah differs significantly from the contemporary Jewish concept. The core Christian belief is that through belief in and acceptance of the death and resurrection of Jesus, sinful humans can be reconciled to God and thereby are offered salvation and the promise of eternal life. Jesus, having become fully human, suffered the pains and temptations of a mortal man, but did not sin. As fully God, he rose to life again. According to the New Testament, he rose from the dead, [38] ascended to heaven, is seated at the right hand of the Father [39] and will ultimately return [Acts 1: In comparison, his adulthood, especially the week before his death, is well documented in the gospels contained within the New Testament, because that part of his life is believed to be most important. The death and resurrection of Jesus are usually considered the most important events in Christian theology, partly because they demonstrate that Jesus has power over life and death and therefore has the authority and power to give people eternal life. Arguments over death and resurrection claims occur at many religious debates and interfaith dialogues. Salvation Christianity Paul the Apostle, like Jews and Roman pagans of his time, believed that sacrifice can bring about new kinship ties, purity and eternal life. The Catholic Church teaches that salvation does not occur without faithfulness on the part of Christians; converts must live in accordance with principles of love and ordinarily must be baptized. Reformed theology places distinctive emphasis on grace by teaching that individuals are completely incapable of self-redemption, but that sanctifying grace is irresistible. Together, these three persons are sometimes called the Godhead, [56] [57] [58] although there is no single term in use in Scripture to denote the unified Godhead. Though distinct, the three persons cannot be divided from one another in being or in operation. While some Christians also believe that God appeared as the Father in the Old Testament, it is agreed that he appeared as the Son in the New Testament, and will still continue to manifest as the Holy Spirit in the present. But still, God still existed as three persons in each of these times. In some Early Christian sarcophagi the Logos is distinguished with a beard, "which allows him to appear ancient, even preexistent. From earlier than the times of the Nicene Creed, Christianity advocated [63] the triune mystery -nature of God as a normative profession of faith. According to Roger E. Olson and Christopher Hall, through prayer, meditation, study and practice, the Christian community concluded "that God must exist as both a unity and trinity", codifying this in ecumenical council at the end of the 4th century. The distinction lies in their relations, the Father being unbegotten; the Son being begotten of the Father; and the Holy Spirit proceeding from the Father and in Western Christian theology from the Son. Regardless of this apparent difference, the three "persons" are each eternal and omnipotent. The Greek word trias [66] [note 3] is first seen in this sense in the works of Theophilus of Antioch; his text reads: It is found in many passages of Origen. Trinitarianism Trinitarianism denotes those Christians who believe in the concept of the Trinity. Almost all Christian denominations and churches hold Trinitarian beliefs. Since that time, Christian theologians have been careful to emphasize that Trinity does not imply that there are three gods the antitrinitarian heresy of Tritheism, nor that each hypostasis of the Trinity is one-third of an infinite God partialism, nor that the Son and the Holy Spirit are beings created by and subordinate to the Father Arianism. Rather, the Trinity is defined as one God in three Persons. Nontrinitarianism Nontrinitarianism or antitrinitarianism refers to theology that rejects the doctrine of the Trinity. Various nontrinitarian views, such as adoptionism or modalism, existed in early Christianity, leading to the disputes about Christology. Christianity, like other religions, has adherents whose beliefs and biblical interpretations vary. Christianity regards the biblical canon, the Old Testament and the New Testament, as the inspired word of God. The traditional view of inspiration is that God worked through human authors so that what they produced was what God wished to communicate. The Greek word referring to inspiration in 2 Timothy 3: Others claim inerrancy for the Bible in its original manuscripts, although none of those are extant. Still others maintain that only a particular translation is inerrant, such as the King James

Version. The books of the Bible accepted by the Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant churches vary somewhat, with Jews accepting only the Hebrew Bible as canonical; there is however substantial overlap. These variations are a reflection of the range of traditions , and of the councils that have convened on the subject. Every version of the Old Testament always includes the books of the Tanakh , the canon of the Hebrew Bible. These books appear in the Septuagint , but are regarded by Protestants to be apocryphal. However, they are considered to be important historical documents which help to inform the understanding of words, grammar and syntax used in the historical period of their conception. Modern scholarship has raised many issues with the Bible. Another issue is that several books are considered to be forgeries. The injunction that women "be silent and submissive" in 1 Timothy 2 [83] is thought by many to be a forgery by a follower of Paul, a similar phrase in 1 Corinthians 14, [84] which is thought to be by Paul, appears in different places in different manuscripts and is thought to originally be a margin note by a copyist. A final issue with the Bible is the way in which books were selected for inclusion in the New Testament. Other Gospels have now been recovered, such as those found near Nag Hammadi in , and while some of these texts are quite different from what Christians have been used to, it should be understood that some of this newly recovered Gospel material is quite possibly contemporaneous with, or even earlier than, the New Testament Gospels. The core of the Gospel of Thomas , in particular, may date from as early as AD 50 although some major scholars contest this early dating , [86] and if so would provide an insight into the earliest gospel texts that underlie the canonical Gospels, texts that are mentioned in Luke 1: Scholarship, then, is currently exploring the relationship in the Early Church between mystical speculation and experience on the one hand and the search for church order on the other, by analyzing new-found texts, by subjecting canonical texts to further scrutiny, and by an examination of the passage of New Testament texts to canonical status. Catholic interpretation Main article: Catholic theology of Scripture In antiquity, two schools of exegesis developed in Alexandria and Antioch. Alexandrine interpretation, exemplified by Origen , tended to read Scripture allegorically , while Antiochene interpretation adhered to the literal sense, holding that other meanings called theoria could only be accepted if based on the literal meaning. The spiritual sense is further subdivided into: The allegorical sense, which includes typology. An example would be the parting of the Red Sea being understood as a "type" sign of baptism. The anagogical sense, which applies to eschatology , eternity and the consummation of the world Regarding exegesis , following the rules of sound interpretation, Catholic theology holds: The injunction that all other senses of sacred scripture are based on the literal [92] [93] That the historicity of the Gospels must be absolutely and constantly held [94] That scripture must be read within the "living Tradition of the whole Church" [95] and That "the task of interpretation has been entrusted to the bishops in communion with the successor of Peter, the Bishop of Rome ". Clarity of Scripture Protestant Christians believe that the Bible is a self-sufficient revelation, the final authority on all Christian doctrine, and revealed all truth necessary for salvation. This concept is known as sola scriptura. The significance of the text includes the ensuing use of the text or application. The original passage is seen as having only a single meaning or sense. The moment we neglect this principle we drift out upon a sea of uncertainty and conjecture. Taken together, both define the term Biblical hermeneutics.

Chapter 4 : Christian Theology and Doctrine

Bible and Theology Program The Bible and Theology Program is designed for the student who desires to draw closer in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ through a study of Scripture. Students in this program will gain a broad understanding of the Bible, Its origin, authority, and hermeneutical principles.

A primer for understanding the Bible doctrines that shape Christian living. The basics of the Scriptures, salvation, Christian culture, the Holy Spirit, Christian ceremony, faith, worship, healing, our enemy, righteousness, peace, joy, prayer, giving, ministry, Heaven and Hell. The Kingdom of God Dr. A study of the Kingdom of God from a practical viewpoint. A study of boundaries as found in the Scripture. This course will establish who must observe boundaries, the consequence of violating them, and how to legally transfer boundaries. Boundaries will be analyzed in context of the Ten Commandments. Holy Spirit I Dr. A study of the Third Person of the Trinity. Topics include the seven personalities, the seven moods, the seven offices and the seven powers of the Holy Spirit. A foundational study of prayer. The course will focus on a scriptural and systematic study of spiritual warfare. Students will come to see that Satan has already been defeated and has no place to stand. Introduction to the scientific method and a survey of the basic concepts of the biological, natural, and physical sciences. Related questions which confront the biblical Christian world view. Topics include scientific creationism, theistic evolution, Mt. A study of prophets and prophecy in the New Testament and today. A renewed understanding of the gift of prophecy is presented. Our Glorious Inheritance I Rev. This is an exhaustive study of over names and titles God has given His people. Seeing this revelation of our God-given names is one of the most comprehensive ways of viewing the full spectrum of our inheritance as sons and daughters of the Most High. The Theology of Love Dr. The purpose of this course is to teach believers the importance of loving each other and mankind in general. The student will study love from a theological basis, discovering what love is and how to demonstrate it. The eternal plan of God for mankind is revealed in the Scriptures. Laying the Foundation Dr. We study these foundation stones in great detail in light of personal salvation. This is a study of all the gifts of the Holy Spirit in the Scripture. Special emphasis is placed upon the nine charismatic gifts presented in 1 Corinthians The Theology of the Blood Dr. This course shows all that the blood of Jesus has accomplished. Priesthood of the Believer Dr. This course emphasizes our Christian privilege of being kings and priests unto God. Biblical and historical issues of priestly ministry to the Lord are discussed. A Christian Perspective Rev. A biblical understanding of spiritual, mystical and supernatural things. The student will gain insights to help him discern which spiritual manifestations are from God and which are not. It will give the student a greater sensitivity to spiritual operations and help him avoid many of the pitfalls common among Christians. The Ministry of Angels Rev. The doctrine of angels is Bible-based and will correct common misconceptions. Counters the New Age philosophy and traditions concerning angels. Sound biblical teaching that will help the student discover the purpose and importance of angels from a biblical perspective. A Theology of Worship Dr. This course demonstrates the pathway to a deeper, fuller, more satisfying relationship with God. It teaches you to embrace the heavenly Father in worship and experience the fullness of all He has for you. You will learn how pure spiritual worship positions you to receive God Himself and His blessings for you. A Theology of Power Dr. Power begins with God. This is evidenced by our world being designed by a powerful Creator through whom all things are sustained and continue to operate within the boundaries of His purposes. This course considers restoration from a truly biblical base. This course is a study that shows how the restoration of fallen mankind, natural and national Israel, and the Church can be affected only on the grounds of redemption that is found in Christ Jesus. A Theology of Joy Dr. This course will explore the Bible theology of joy in three specific areas: If joy is biblical, we should embrace it fully as a divine gift. The study centers on reformation Hebrews 9: Anonymous Women of Faith: A study of the lives of people who demonstrated supernatural faith. Learn what faith is, how to get faith, and how to live a faith-based life. The author uses descriptors to classify the types of faith exhibited by each of the women studied. A practical examination of prayer in regard to biblical principles. The Work of the Holy Spirit Rev. Understanding Islam in the Modern World Dr. An overview of the religion of Islam,

including its history, changes, and impact on modern civilization from a Christian perspective. It includes the origins, beliefs, and various cultural mores of Islam. The spiritual power of the Gospel message, the spiritual battle in which the church is engaged, supernatural miracles, conversion experiences, and the missional responsibilities are also discussed. The Covenants of God Rev. This course deals with the various covenant relationships established between God and man in Scripture from Adam until Christ. Biblical Theology of the Kingdom Rev. Topics include defining the Kingdom of God, the relationship between the Kingdom and the church, entering the Kingdom, extending the Kingdom, and locating the Kingdom. Engaging the Culture with a Biblical Worldview Dr. It is intentionally and distinctly non-partisan, recognizing that civil government and politics is incredibly broken and at times convoluted. The class will answer the question as to whether or not Jesus, the early church, and apostles participated in this type of activity and exactly how it was approached. The course will be divided into the theology of cultural engagement, the philosophy of cultural engagement, and the practices a Christian leader or Pastor might seek to implement. Holy Spirit II Availability: This course is a continuation of BT This course focuses on the ever-increasing manifestation and work of the Holy Spirit in the last days preceding the return of Jesus Christ. There are many wonderful resources on the Person, gifts, and ministry of the Holy Spirit. This study draws from these, but its primary emphasis is on the urgent need for the Church to cooperate with what the Holy Spirit is doing in the Church and in the earth in the last days. Spirit, Soul and Body Dr. A biblical study focusing upon the various words of scripture translated as spirit, soul and body. Emphasis is placed upon distinguishing between these aspects of man and their interrelationship. Questions of Faith I: This course explores the Philosophy of Religion. Included in this study is consideration of major questions in this discipline: If God is all-powerful and all-good why is there suffering? Is there life after death? No previous background in religious studies or philosophy is required. Questions of Faith II: Are science and religion incompatible? If there is an afterlife, what might it be like? Why are there so many religions? What is the nature of religious experience? No previous background in religious studies or philosophy is required. Examines the theology of the church in the Scriptures. Church offices and ordinances are also studied. This is a study of the Church The Ekklesia designed to compare the original Church introduced by Jesus Christ with our contemporary version. The Christian doctrine of God. The divine Trinity discussed as well as the biblical names of God and the unique works of God as outlined for us in Scripture. Examines the theology of redemption and salvation in the Holy Scriptures.

Chapter 5 : MA (Church History/Historical Theology)

Christian Life School Of Theology. While some say that online programs rob students of the opportunity to participate in face-to-face discussions, the reality is that online classes do not allow students to sit quietly without participating as actually happens quite often in traditional classrooms.

Seeing how the church has responded to the gospel over time not only helps me make sense of Christianity today, but also helps me to be more prepared to lead the church tomorrow. With my education I hope to learn from mistakes of the past and capitalize on how the faithful have succeeded in following God. My time at Lincoln Christian Seminary is helping me to see how God continually raises up workers to bring His kingdom to the world in each succeeding generation. Bob Rea profoundly impacted my view of the church, spirituality, and practical ministry. Under his patient guidance, I grew to love the church more deeply and practice my own spirituality more dynamically. A previously foggy understanding of the legacy of the church through the ages was made more clear, and I gained access to ancient insights that are just as valuable today as they were when first recorded by their authors. Perhaps most importantly, I did not simply learn facts. My processes of observation, critique, and methodology were permanently affected. I no longer see the church, society, or myself the way I once did. My education, full of individual and community learning settings, transformed me. Reflections of Our First Fifty Years Lincoln Christian University provided me with the tools to work at the intersection of Christ and culture in a key point in our world, the secular university campus. I am grateful for the knowledge of scripture, theology and church history I acquired at Lincoln, as well as the tools that have enabled me to be a lifelong learner and continue to learn after graduation. Perhaps even more than that, I am grateful for the example of professors who showed ministry is not just about knowledge, but is about loving and serving those we come in contact with. Upon completion of my degree, I can say with confidence that I gained much more than I could have ever dreamed during my time as a student, both academically and spiritually. My personal devotional life has been forever impacted by his challenge to learn from spiritual masters throughout history. Both in and out of class, he encouraged me to think as an individual and to engage in the material being presented. In each step of the academic process, I was challenged to view theology from a historical perspective. As I began to understand the development of doctrine and the evolution of religious movements and theological positions, my own faith was challenged as well. I was forced to seek answers for questions that I had never asked before. Through this journey, class discussions provided a time to engage in genuine dialogue with Dr. Rea and other students who were also seeing how church history matters in their own lives and ministries. I am honored to say that I had the opportunity to be impacted by Dr. Rea and that my life is changed because of my time as a student at Lincoln Christian Seminary. My theological and philosophical horizons were greatly expanded and enriched in terms of exposure, access, and personal development in the vast riches of the Christian tradition. I have been prepared for my doctoral education and whatever lies ahead as a Christian leader in the world today.

Chapter 6 : Christian Theology

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Roman Catholic and Eastern Christians recognize 73 books as canonical, with 46 books for the Old Testament 7 more than Protestants. The Old Testament canon entered into Christian use in the Septuagint , a Greek translation with a few books in Greek originally. In addition to the Septuagint, Christianity subsequently added various writings that would become the New Testament. Somewhat different lists of accepted works continued to develop in antiquity. In the 4th century a series of synods , most notably at the Synod of Hippo in AD , produced a list of texts equal to the 46 book canon of the Old Testament that Catholics use today and the book canon of the New Testament that all use. A definitive list did not come from any early Ecumenical Council. With the benefit of hindsight it can be said that this process effectively set the New Testament canon, although there are examples of other canonical lists in use after this time. During the Protestant Reformation , certain reformers proposed different canonical lists of the Old Testament. The texts that are present in the Septuagint, but not included in the Jewish canon, fell out of favor and, in time, they would come to be removed from Protestant canons. These texts are referred to as Deuterocanonical books in Catholic Bibles, whereas in a Protestant context they are referred to as the Apocrypha. The "New Testament apocrypha" has a very different meaning. It is a poorly defined group of early writings in which, generally, none ever achieved acceptance by any widespread group.

God[edit] Main article: **God in Christianity** In Christianity , God is the creator and preserver of the universe. God is the sole ultimate power in the universe but is distinct from it. The Bible never speaks of God as impersonal. Instead, it refers to him in personal terms " who speaks, sees, hears, acts, and loves. God is understood to have a will and personality and is an all powerful , divine and benevolent being. He is represented in Scripture as being primarily concerned with people and their salvation. For example, saying he is immutable is saying that he does not change.

Enumeration[edit] Some attributes ascribed to God in Christian theology [17] are:

- Aseity** "That "God is so independent that he does not need us.
- Eternity** "That God exists beyond the temporal realm.
- Graciousness** "That God extends His favor and gifts to human beings unconditionally as well as conditionally.
- Holiness** "That God is separate from sin and incorruptible. Noting the refrain of " Holy, holy, holy " in Isaiah 6: Sproul points out that "only once in sacred Scripture is an attribute of God elevated to the third degree The Bible never says that God is love, love, love.
- Impassibility** "That God does not experience emotion or suffering a more controversial doctrine, disputed especially by open theism.
- Impeccability** "That God is incapable of error sin.
- Incorporeality** "That God is without physical composition. While the Mission of God is not traditionally included in this list, David Bosch has argued that " mission is not primarily an activity of the church, but an attribute of God.
- Omnibenevolence** of God refers to him being "all good".
- Omnipotence** "That God is supremely or all-powerful.
- Omnipresence** "That God is the supreme being, existing everywhere and at all times; the all-perceiving or all-conceiving foundation of reality.
- Omniscience** "That God is supremely or all-knowing.
- Oneness**"That God is without peer, also that every divine attribute is instantiated in its entirety the qualitative infinity of God. See also **Monotheism** and **Divine simplicity**.
- Providence** "That God watches over His creation with interest and dedication. While the Providence of God usually refers to his activity in the world, it also implies his care for the universe, and is thus an attribute.
- Righteousness** "That God is the greatest or only measure of human conduct. The righteousness of God may refer to his holiness, to his justice , or to his saving activity through Christ.
- Transcendence** "That God exists beyond the natural realm of physical laws and thus is not bound by them; [22] He is also wholly Other and incomprehensible apart from general or special self-revelation.
- Triune** "The Christian God is understood by trinitarian Christians to be a "threeness" of Father , Son , and Holy Spirit that is fully consistent with His "oneness"; a single infinite being who is both within and beyond nature. Because the persons of the Trinity represent a personal relation even on the level of God to Himself, He is personal both in His relation toward us and in His relation toward Himself.
- Veracity** "That God is the Truth all human beings strive for; He is also impeccably honest.

Christ in Gethsemane, Heinrich Hofmann , Some

Christians believe that the God worshiped by the Hebrew people of the pre-Christian era had always revealed himself as he did through Jesus ; but that this was never obvious until Jesus was born see John 1. Also, though the Angel of the Lord spoke to the Patriarchs, revealing God to them, some believe it has always been only through the Spirit of God granting them understanding, that men have been able to perceive later that God himself had visited them. This mysterious "Trinity" has been described as hypostases in the Greek language subsistences in Latin , and "persons" in English. Nonetheless, Christians stress that they only believe in one God. Most Christian churches teach the Trinity, as opposed to Unitarian monotheistic beliefs. Historically, most Christian churches have taught that the nature of God is a mystery , something that must be revealed by special revelation rather than deduced through general revelation. Christian orthodox traditions Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Protestant follow this idea, which was codified in and reached its full development through the work of the Cappadocian Fathers. Some critics contend that because of the adoption of a tripartite conception of deity, Christianity is a form of tritheism or polytheism. This concept dates from Arian teachings which claimed that Jesus, having appeared later in the Bible than his Father, had to be a secondary, lesser, and therefore distinct god. For Jews and Muslims , the idea of God as a trinity is heretical â€” it is considered akin to polytheism. Christians overwhelmingly assert that monotheism is central to the Christian faith, as the very Nicene Creed among others which gives the orthodox Christian definition of the Trinity does begin with: In the 3rd century, Tertullian claimed that God exists as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spiritâ€”the three personae of one and the same substance. In Christianity , the doctrine of the Trinity states that God is one being who exists, simultaneously and eternally , as a mutual indwelling of three Persons: At that time, the Emperor Constantine convoked the First Council of Nicaea , to which all bishops of the empire were invited to attend. Pope Sylvester I did not attend but sent his legate. The council, among other things, decreed the original Nicene Creed. For most Christians, beliefs about God are enshrined in the doctrine of Trinitarianism , which holds that the three persons of God together form a single God. The Trinitarian view emphasizes that God has a will and that God the Son has two wills, divine and human, though these are never in conflict see Hypostatic union. However, this point is disputed by Oriental Orthodox Christians, who hold that God the Son has only one will of unified divinity and humanity see Miaphysitism. To the ancients, personhood "was in some sense individual, but always in community as well. Since the beginning of the 3rd century [28] the doctrine of the Trinity has been stated as "the one God exists in three Persons and one substance , Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. A small minority of Christians hold non-trinitarian views, largely coming under the heading of Unitarianism. Most, if not all, Christians believe that God is spirit, [John 4: With this background, belief in the divinity of Christ and the Holy Spirit is expressed as the doctrine of the Trinity , [30] which describes the single divine ousia substance existing as three distinct and inseparable hypostases persons: The holy three are separate, yet the Son and the Holy Spirit are still seen as originating from God the Father. The New Testament does not have the term "Trinity" and nowhere discusses the Trinity as such. Some emphasize, however, that the New Testament does repeatedly speak of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit to "compel a trinitarian understanding of God. God the Father[edit] Further information: God the Father In many monotheist religions, God is addressed as the father, in part because of his active interest in human affairs, in the way that a father would take an interest in his children who are dependent on him and as a father, he will respond to humanity, his children, acting in their best interests. Thus, humans, in general, are sometimes called children of God. The New Testament says, in this sense, that the very idea of family, wherever it appears, derives its name from God the Father, [Eph 3: However, there is a deeper "legal" sense in which Christians believe that they are made participants in the special relationship of Father and Son, through Jesus Christ as his spiritual bride. Christians call themselves adopted children of God. According to the Nicene Creed , the Son Jesus Christ is "eternally begotten of the Father", indicating that their divine Father-Son relationship is not tied to an event within time or human history. Christology and Christ[edit] Main articles: Christology and Jesus in Christianity Christology is the field of study within Christian theology which is primarily concerned with the nature, person, and works of Jesus Christ , held by Christians to be the Son of God. There have been and are various perspectives by those who claim to be his followers since the church began after his ascension. The controversies ultimately focused on whether and how a human nature and a

divine nature can co-exist in one person. The study of the inter-relationship of these two natures is one of the preoccupations of the majority tradition. Teachings about Jesus and testimonies about what he accomplished during his three-year public ministry are found throughout the New Testament. Core biblical teachings about the person of Jesus Christ may be summarized that Jesus Christ was and forever is fully God divine and fully human in one sinless person at the same time, [34] and that through the death and resurrection of Jesus, sinful humans can be reconciled to God and thereby are offered salvation and the promise of eternal life via his New Covenant. While there have been theological disputes over the nature of Jesus, Christians believe that Jesus is God incarnate and " true God and true man " or both fully divine and fully human. Jesus, having become fully human in all respects, suffered the pains and temptations of a mortal man, yet he did not sin. As fully God, he defeated death and rose to life again. Scripture asserts that Jesus was conceived, by the Holy Spirit, and born of his virgin mother Mary without a human father. The apostle Peter, in what has become a famous proclamation of faith among Christians since the 1st century, said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God. The word is often misunderstood to be the surname of Jesus due to the numerous mentions of Jesus Christ in the Christian Bible. The word is in fact used as a title, hence its common reciprocal use Christ Jesus, meaning Jesus the Anointed One or Jesus the Messiah. Followers of Jesus became known as Christians because they believed that Jesus was the Christ, or Messiah, prophesied about in the Old Testament, or Tanakh. Trinitarian Ecumenical Councils[edit] See also: Ecumenical council Major christological schisms and related early councils. The Christological controversies came to a head over the persons of the Godhead and their relationship with one another. Christology was a fundamental concern from the First Council of Nicaea until the Third Council of Constantinople

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COURSE DESCRIPTION. With the contemporary interest in spirituality, it is imperative that the Church establish a comprehensive theology of Christian spirituality that can inform the life and witness of Christian believers.