

# CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY

**Professor James S. Cutsinger**

The aim of this course is to explore, not just the *what*, but the *why* of Christian faith. What do Christians—Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestant—believe about God, creation, the fall, salvation, the Holy Spirit, the resurrection, and life after death? And what are their grounds—scriptural, experiential, and logical—for holding these beliefs? Special attention will be devoted to the person of Christ and the doctrine of the incarnation.

This approach is sometimes referred to as systematic theology, for the goal is to understand the essential doctrines of Christianity as organically related parts of a single metaphysical, spiritual, and cosmological system. Our chief interest is not the historical origin or development of religious institutions nor the social or psychological context of religious convictions, but the internal consistency and underlying meaning of the Christian view of reality.

## Readings

Three texts are required: James S. Cutsinger, *That Man Might Become God*, the instructor's lectures for the course; *The Orthodox Way*, by Metropolitan Kallistos Ware; and a *Reader in Christian Theology*; compiled by the instructor and arranged to correspond with the chapters in Ware, each section of the reader contains both a classic text from the Christian tradition and a selection from the writings of C. S. Lewis.

## Schedule [the last time the course was taught before my retirement, Fall 2016]

I. *Orthodox Way*, "Prologue: Signposts on the Way"; *Reader*, 1, 2

Aug. 18, No assignment (first day of class)

Aug. 23, *Lecture 1*; Aug. 25, *Lecture 2*; Aug. 30, *Lecture 3*

II. *Orthodox Way*, Chapter 1, "God as Mystery"; *Reader*, 3, 4

Sep. 1, *Lecture 4*; Sep. 6, *Lecture 5*

III. *Orthodox Way*, Chapter 2, "God as Trinity"; *Reader*, 5, 6

Sep. 8, *Lecture 6*; Sep. 13, No class; Sep. 15, *Lecture 7*; Sep. 20, *Lecture 8*

IV. *Orthodox Way*, Chapter 3, "God as Creator"; *Reader*, 7, 8

Sep. 22, *Lecture 9*; Sep. 27, *Lecture 10*; Sep. 29, *Lecture 11*

V. *Orthodox Way*, Chapter 4, "God as Man"; *Reader*, 9, 10, 11, Appendix

Oct. 4, *Lecture 12*

Oct. 6, Review for Midterm and Open Discussion

**Midterm Examination** via Blackboard, due by Oct. 11

Oct. 11, *Lecture 13*; Oct. 13, Fall Break (no class); Oct. 18, *Lecture 14*

VI. *Orthodox Way*, Chapter 5, “God as Spirit”; *Reader*, 12, 13

Oct. 20, *Lecture 15*; Oct. 25, *Lecture 16*; Oct. 27, *Lecture 17*

VII. *Orthodox Way*, Chapter 6, “God as Prayer”; *Reader*, 14, 15

Nov. 1, *Lecture 18*; Nov. 3, *Lecture 19*; Nov. 8, Election Day (no class);

Nov. 10, *Lecture 20*

VIII. *Orthodox Way*, “Epilogue: God as Eternity”; *Reader*, 16, 17

Nov. 15, *Lecture 21*; Nov. 17, *Lecture 22*; Nov. 22, No class (AAR Meeting); Nov.

24, Thanksgiving (no class); Nov. 29, *Lecture 23*

Dec. 1, Review for Final Exam and Open Discussion

Dec. 8, **Final Examination** in class