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BT 750 Theological Hermeneutics

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Course Description
Theological hermeneutics takes as its starting point and central axis the theological claim that “the Bible is Scripture,” a claim that, first, draws attention to the origin, role, and aim of these texts in God’s self-communication; and, second, locates those who read the Bible as Scripture on a particular textual map, a location possessing its own assumptions, values, and norms for guiding and animating particular beliefs, dispositions, and practices constitutive of that people. This advanced seminar invites critical examination of a range of approaches to theological hermeneutics of Christian Scripture.

Prerequisites
NT520 and OT520 (or BS501-502), ST501

Course Objectives
Having successfully completed this course, participants will be able to:
- Articulate the significance of a specifically ecclesial context for biblical interpretation;
- Compare and critically assess varied approaches to theological hermeneutics; and
- Propose and/or defend (an) approach(es) to the task of theological interpretation of Christian Scripture.

Course Reading — Required

Course Reading — Recommended


Course Requirements


(1) Seminar Attendance, Preparation, and Participation: See the schedule of reading for each class session. Note that assigned reading should be completed by the day listed. Attendance at and readiness to participate in all sessions of the seminar is expected. (15%)

(2) Seminar Presentation: A descriptive and critical presentation on one of the assigned readings (see the Course Schedule)—ca. 1250-1750 words (i.e., ca. 5-7 pp.), typed, double-spaced, with a 12-point font like Times New Roman. Presenters should conclude their papers by proposing 5-10 questions designed to help guide seminar discussion. Due in written form to the instructor and the respondent (see below) no less than twenty-four hours before, and to all members of the seminar at the beginning of, the session for which the reading is assigned. Participants may sign-up for any open session beginning 1 June 2005. (25%)

(3) Seminar Response: A critical response to a presentation on one of the assigned readings offered in fulfillment of Course Requirement (2)—ca. 500-750 words (i.e., ca. 2-3 pp.), typed, double-spaced, with a 12-point font like Times New Roman. Due in written form to the instructor and presenter at the beginning of the session for which the reading is assigned. Participants may sign-up for any open session beginning 1 June 2005. (15%)

(4) Final Exam: An open-book, open-note, take-home, self-timed examination. The exam will cover selections of the assigned reading and will require seminar participants to reflect constructively on their understanding of (or proposal for) theological hermeneutics. The exam should be typed, double-spaced, with a 12-point font like Times New Roman. Due: 24 June 2005. (45%)

Course Schedule

6 June (1) Introduction: The Nature of Theological Hermeneutics. Recent Proposals.

13 June (2) Discussion of Davis/Hays:
   (a) pp. xiv–159
   (b) pp. 163–273
14 June  (3) Discussion of Fowl:
         (a) chs. 1–6
         (b) chs. 7–11

15 June  (4) Discussion of Fowl:
         (c) chs. 12–16
Discussion of Jones/Buckley.

16 June  (5) Discussion of Burnett:
         (a) pp. 1–124
         (b) pp. 125-264

17 June  (6) Discussion of Zimmermann:
         (a) pp. 1-132
         (b) pp. 230-322

24 June  Due by 4:30 pm: Final Exam.