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ST 620 Emotions, Feelings, and Passion

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Course: ST620 W1 (JA 2009)  
Title: Emotions, Feelings, & Passion  
Hours: 3.00  
Published: Yes, on 01/01/2009  
Prerequisites:  
None

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Meetings:  
During 01/05/2009 to 01/09/2009 on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 8:00a to 5:00p in M306.

Maximum Registration: 30  
Catalog Description: Focuses on the role of the emotions, feelings, and passions for one's religious beliefs. Although the design of this course is theological in method, it includes the psychological dimension since its purpose is to understand the relationship between believing and feeling.

Objectives:  
ST 620  
THE EMOTIONS, FEELINGS, AND PASSION  
January Term (Jan. 5-9)  
Class Meets 8:30-4:30 M-F  
Larry Wood, Professor  
Asbury Theological Seminary

WELCOME to this seminar class on the theological role of emotions, feelings, and passion. I can assure you on the basis of past student evaluations that this class will inspire you to a better self-understanding of your own faith.
development, as well as help you to understand that the affective resources of faith are as essential as the intellectual and logical. If this class has been perceived to be beneficial to students in the past, it is because our primary resource has been the writings of Frank Lake, Clinical Theology. The class is thus shaped around the psychoanalytical theology of Frank Lake. This is both a strength and a weakness. It is a strength because it allows for greater depth coverage of the theological insights of psychoanalysis as developed by Frank Lake. A weakness is that this course is narrowly limited to this particular approach. As a result of using Lake’s Clinical Theology, this course will highlight the psychological factors in faith development and theological construction.

**LEARNING GOALS:**

Upon the completion of this course, the student will have an increased understanding of:

1. the theories of emotion, especially psychoanalysis, and their relevance to faith;
2. how emotions, feelings, and passion shape one’s personal theology;
3. how early childhood experiences decisively predispose what one’s attitude toward God will be;
4. the nature of intellectual defense against emotional and spiritual injury;
5. how doubt and disbelief are more often rooted in emotional injury than in objective intellectual considerations;
6. biblical and theological resources for the healing of injured emotions;
7. the pastor’s responsibility for ministering to the emotional-theological needs of the members of their congregation in terms of pastoral care giving as distinct from professional psychological counseling;
8. a relational theology of the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit who brings healing and health to persons in a broken and hurting world.

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

1. Frank Lake, Clinical Theology. 2 volumes. Frank Lake offers a brilliant synthesis of psychotherapy, theology, and philosophy. Clinical Theology is one of the few best books ever written. His case-study approach to pastoral theology demonstrates how emotionally scarring events in one’s life affect one capacity to relate to others and to God. This is a “must read” book for appreciating the significance of the affective dimensions of religious belief and practice. Although this book was first published in 1966, Lake’s fundamental insights about the meaning of interpersonal relationships for wholesome thinking about God, others, and oneself are virtually unparalleled. This is not to say, of course, that one will agree with Lake on everything.

**GENERAL REQUIREMENTS:**

1. There will be no formal tests, but each student will write a research paper (25 pages) on a theme related to the affective dimensions of faith. Students will usually identify their topic after the first week of class. Proper thesis format is required, based on the Chicago Manual of Style. The final paper will be due the last day of the January term, which is February 1, 2008. It may be submitted as an email attachment. This paper will constitute 50% of your grade.
2. Class attendance is required. Learning is more than acquiring factual information contained in texts, though that arduous task is absolutely essential. Learning is more than rote memory. Learning involves “thinking out loud” and engaging in conversation. Attending class provides a dialogical context for listening and participating in the meaning of ideas.

**CLASS FORMAT:**

1. The first day of Class will consist primarily of lectures and power point presentations providing a general introduction to the relation of psychology and theology.
2. The remaining four day-long classes will entail discussions (not formal lectures) focused on a range of readings in Frank Lake, Clinical Theology. The class conversations will be led by the professor, but each student is expected to have read the assigned readings and to be ready to participate in the class discussions. Readiness for class discussions will constitute 50% of the grade.
FIRST DAY OF CLASS - MONDAY (JAN 5)

General Introduction
A lecture on the classical theories of emotion—the cognitive, the feeling, the behavioristic, and the psychoanalytic. Special attention will also be given to postmodern developments in psychology, noting some difference between the modern and postmodern points of view.

Recommended Reading:

The Role of Feeling as a Method of Knowing
A lecture on Rousseau (1712-1778), the "Father of Romanticism." Rousseau introduced the capacity of feeling in philosophy as an alternate way to know God as a revolt against the Enlightenment thought of the French philosophers.

Recommended Reading:

A lecture on Schleiermacher (1768-1834), the "Father of Modern Theology." Schleiermacher formally introduced "feeling" as the primary method of doing theology in 1799.

Recommended Reading:

A lecture on Hegel (1770-1831). As the high point of Romanticism in philosophy, Hegel highlighted the idea of religion as a "thoughtful feeling" of unity with God. His influence in the subsequent history of philosophy and theology has been enormous.

Recommended Reading:

Left Brain, Right Brain Research and the Neurophysiological Basis of Feeling
A lecture on recent brain research that indicates how the two hemispheres of the brain process emotion, noting in particular how the right hemisphere processes emotional information.

Recommended Reading:
Relationality and the Meaning of Persons

A lecture on Paul Tillich who offers an exposition of the meaning of persons who must live with feelings of ambiguity and anxiety. He believes feelings of meaninglessness typify our contemporary world and thus faith must be redefined as courage (a neo-Stoicism) as a result of the modern experience of personal estrangement and a loss of belief in the traditional view of God.

Recommended Reading:

A lecture on Jürgen Moltmann who focuses on the social/relational/emotional characteristics of God’s nature. Through his proposal of a Trinitarian pneumatology, he seeks to show how love and human freedom (both personal and social) can become the basis of meaningful community.

Recommended Reading:

Seminar Discussion Assignments

This course is a seminar intended to help students to "get into the materials" and have a meaningful class discussion. Although the professor will lead and moderate these class conversations, student participation is a "must." Student participation will constitute 25% of the grade.

Students must do one of the following: (1) mark up your books as an aid for summarizing and highlighting the things out of the reading assignment that you think are important, (See Mortimer Adler on "How to Mark a Book" [link] OR (2) you must take notes from the assigned readings. These markings/notes will constitute 25% of your grade. So it will be important to taking this assignment seriously by taking careful notes, OR, marking up your books thoroughly, using Adler suggestions as a guide.

A Comment about LSD

Do not be too shocked by the use of LSD as an abreactive drug treatment. Discovered in 1938 by Albert Hofmann in Basel, Switzerland, LSD is a very powerful mood-changing chemical, which is manufactured from lysergic acid that is found in ergot (a fungus that grows on rye and other grains). [Link to NIDA Infonfacts]

It was commonly used by psychiatrists to help patients, among other things, to reduce their defense mechanisms and supposedly open them up to remember repressed events. Here is what Stanislav Grof, M.D., writes on the therapeutic use of the abreactive effect of LSD:

Many observations from early LSD research clearly indicated that the drug can facilitate reliving of various emotionally relevant episodes from infancy, childhood, or later life. In the case of traumatic memories, this process was preceded and accompanied by powerful emotional abreaction and catharsis. It seemed, therefore, only logical to explore the value of LSD as an agent for abreactive therapy in a way similar to the earlier use of ether, short-acting barbiturates, or amphetamines, in the same indication.

From the historical and theoretical point of view, this mechanism can be traced back to the early concepts of Freud and Breuer. (29) According to them, insufficient emotional and motor reaction by a
patient to an original traumatic event results in "jamming" of the effect: the strangulated emotions ("abgeklemmter Affekt") later provide energy for neurotic symptoms. Treatment then consists in reliving the traumatizing memory under circumstances that make possible a belated redirection of this emotional energy to the periphery and its discharge through perceptual, emotional, and motor channels. From the practical point of view, the abreactive method was found especially valuable in the treatment of traumatic emotional neuroses and became popular during the Second World War as a quick and effective remedy for hysterical conversions occurring in various battle situations.

There is hardly a single LSD therapist who would have doubts about the unique abreactive properties of LSD. It would be, however, a great oversimplification to approach and understand LSD treatment only as abreaction therapy. This was clearly demonstrated in a controlled study by Robinson. (86) Present opinion is that abreaction is an important component of LSD psychotherapy, but it represents just one of many therapeutic mechanisms resulting from the complex action of this drug. [See Chapter 1 of *LSD Psychotherapy* (Alameda, CA: Hunter House Publishers, 1980, 1994), ISBN 0-89793-158-0, cited at the following website: http://www.druglibrary.org/schaffer/lsd/grofhist.htm#back5].

Because of its widespread recreational use and its extremely dangerous effects as hallucinogens, LSD was made illegal, including medical and psychiatric uses, in the late 1960's.

(Jan 6 - 9)

Frank Lake, *Clinical Theology, A Theological And Psychiatric Basis to Clinical Pastoral Care* (Call # BV4012 L282 1987)

Chapter 1—“The Christian Service of Listening, Dialogue, Witness and Counseling in Relation to Troubled Persons, Sufferers from the Psychoneuroses, and the Disorders of Personality. “The Understanding and Care of Schizoid Personalities, pp. 1-100
Chapter 2--The Understanding of Depressed, Melancholy or Accidious Persons p. 101
Chapter 3--Depression, continued. Practical Considerations in Method and Communication, p.209
Chapter 4--The Understanding and Treatment of Hysterical Personalities 379
Chapter 9—"The Understanding and Care of Schizoid Personalities in their Affliction" pp. 553-923

Most of our attention will be focused on the topic of the schizoid position. Considerable attention has been given to this condition since Lake's ground-breaking work with further modifications of its meaning, but the basic description entails the condition of a "pervasive pattern of detachment from social relationships" [Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fourth Edition, DSM_IV-TR, (Washington, D.C: American Psychiatric Association, 2000), pp. 694- 696.]. Although less than 1% of the population might be clinically diagnosed with this disorder, the value of Lake's classic treatment is to that by highlighting the extremes of this behavior, it puts in sharp relief a central issue of our times—personal injury innocently inflicted on us by negative personal relationships and the resulting feelings of estrangement caused by trans-marginal stress. It particularly assists us in seeing how our "feelings" influence the way we think about God. I think it will be evident from this study that our theological beliefs are primarily the results of conversations in life and the relationships that we have had with others who have influenced us personally to think and behave in certain ways.