

RTS

O R L A N D O



Th.M. COURSE SYLLABUS

ST7610: Christology

Steven J. Duby, PhD

Summer 2026

PROFESSOR'S CONTACT INFORMATION

NAME: Steven Duby

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COURSE DATES

IN CLASS DATES: July 6-10, 2026

COURSE COMPLETION DATE: July 31, 2026 (Deadline for Research Paper)

COURSE OVERVIEW

DESCRIPTION:

This class explores the doctrine of the person of Christ, considering exegetical, historical, philosophical, and dogmatic issues. This will involve study of Scripture as well as patristic, medieval, early modern Protestant, and modern theological works. Sub-topics for the class include connections between Christology and theology proper, Christ's mission and economic office, the hypostatic union, and various consequents of the hypostatic union in the doctrine of the person of Christ. The class will be conducted in a seminar format, focusing on reading and discussion of primary texts.

GOALS:

At the end of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Explain key exegetical bases for and debates in Christology.
2. Explain key developments in the history of Christology.
3. Articulate the viability of orthodox Christology in the context of modern theological questions and debates.
4. Apply the insights of Christology to the life of the church and to one's own spiritual life.

COURSE DETAILS

1. GRADING SCHEDULE.

Late work will be penalized 1 letter grade per day, unless prior permission for late submission was granted.

The published RTS grading scale is used in this course. See the latest Catalog.

2. ATTENDANCE AND LATE ASSIGNMENTS.

Attendance and prepared participation is required. If class is not attended, the student's final grade will be affected.

3. SPECIAL NEEDS.

In order to ensure full class participation, any student with a disabling condition requiring special accommodations (e.g. recording device, special adaptive equipment) is strongly encouraged to contact the instructor before the beginning of the course.

4. ACADEMIC HONESTY (QUOTED AND ADAPTED FROM DR. TIMOTHY PHILLIPS OF WHEATON COLLEGE).

The assignments are designed to extend and deepen your comprehension and appreciation of Christian theology and to increase your facility with theological method. The processes of defining a topic, researching the results of others' studies, critiquing those studies, and organizing your conclusions in a clear and cogent presentation provides valuable skills for your various leadership ministries. The use of sources is an essential step in appropriating the learning of the Church's tradition in its relationship to cultures to help us understand and faithfully practice Scripture.

Using information obtained from a source without indicating it (whether by footnote, parentheses, or bibliography or some other appropriate reference, depending on the type of assignment) is plagiarism (intellectual thievery and lying). This applies to any information that you gain from someone that is not "common knowledge." It does not apply only to exact quotations or precise verbal allusions. Altering the wording does not remove the obligation to acknowledge the source.

Cheating is the presentation of someone else's work, which the student ought to have done personally. This includes submitting answers to test questions derived by some means other than that intended by the instructor. It also includes turning in written assignments composed in whole or in part by someone else or by use of AI-powered programs (such as ChatGPT).

See also pertinent discussion of plagiarism in the latest RTS Catalog.

5. DISCLAIMER.

This syllabus is intended to reflect accurately the learning objectives, instructional format and other information necessary for students to appraise the course. However, the instructor reserves the right to modify any portion of this syllabus as may become necessary.

6. SUPPORT:

Canvas allows you to interact with the Professor or his teaching assistant via the Inbox function.

Canvas also allows for interaction with classmates. You can interact with classmates via the Student-to-Student forum or Conferences.

See FAQ on the Home Page or at Modules > Course Resources for instructions on various Canvas features.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

READING

The following books are required:**

The Bible.

Barth, Karl. *Church Dogmatics, IV.1: The Doctrine of Reconciliation*, §57-59. Ed. G. W. Bromiley and T. F. Torrance. Trans. G. W. Bromiley. Vol. 21 of *Church Dogmatics* Study Edition. London: T & T Clark, 2009.

Barth, Karl. *Church Dogmatics, IV.2: The Doctrine of Reconciliation*, §64. Ed. G. W. Bromiley and T. F. Torrance. Trans. G. W. Bromiley. Vol. 24 of *Church Dogmatics* Study Edition. London: T & T Clark, 2009.

Duby, Steven J. *Jesus and the God of Classical Theism: Biblical Christology in Light of the Doctrine of God*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2022.

John of Damascus. *Writings*. Trans. Frederic H. Chase, Jr. Fathers of the Church. Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1958.

Thomas Aquinas. *Summa theologiae, Prima pars, 1-49*. Trans. Laurence Shapcote. Green Bay: Aquinas Institute; Steubenville: Emmaus Academic, 2012.

Thomas Aquinas. *Summa theologiae, Tertia pars, 1-59*. Trans. Laurence Shapcote. Green Bay: Aquinas Institute; Steubenville: Emmaus Academic, 2012.

Turretin, Francis. *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*. Vol. 1. Ed. James T. Dennison.
Trans. George Musgrave Giger. Phillipsburg: P & R Publishing, 1994.
Turretin, Francis. *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*. Vol. 2. Ed. James T. Dennison.
Trans. George Musgrave Giger. Phillipsburg: P & R Publishing, 1994.
Van Dixhoorn, Chad. *Creeds, Confessions, and Catechisms: A Reader's Edition*.
Wheaton: Crossway, 2022.

** Note that in some cases alternative versions of the required texts are available (e.g., John of Damascus, Aquinas, Barth). Students who need or wish to acquire alternative versions may do so, but they should bear in mind that the syllabus and the in-class discussion conducted by the professor will use the editions included here as reference points for reading and conversation.

ADDITIONAL ASSIGNMENTS

Readings for each class must be completed before the beginning of the class period. Students must come prepared to discuss the reading material and to build upon it through interacting with the professor and classmates. See the “Course Week Schedule” below regarding which readings pertain to which days.

A reading and attendance report must be submitted on the last day of class. The reading and attendance report must be submitted to the professor by email (sduby@ps.edu). In the reading and attendance report, you will simply tell the professor in the body of the email how many days you attended class *and also* completed the required reading on time.

RESEARCH PAPER

I. Overview

For this double-spaced, 10-12 page paper, you will select a sub-topic within the doctrine of the person of Christ. You may choose one of the following options below. If you wish to pursue a topic not listed below, you may do so provided you receive the professor's approval. In either case, you will be expected to use the same broad outline that is provided below so that both you and the professor can be confident that you are touching upon the crucial aspects of the sub-topic that you choose. Failure to use the broad outline provided below for your paper (with these particular headings) will result in a substantial grade reduction.

II. Potential Topics

Each of the following would be a suitable topic for your paper:

- Christ's eternal generation from the Father
- Christ's human knowledge and faith
- Christ's human weaknesses
- the meaning of the *communicatio idiomatum*

Whichever topic you choose, you will be required to do the following:

- 1) explain the exegetical bases for this doctrine
- 2) discuss pertinent theological questions, logical implications, and debates on this subject and state briefly how they help you to refine your view of the subject
- 3) discuss and respond to two potential objections to the doctrine
- 4) apply the doctrine to the life of the church and/or the life of the Christian believer

III. Structure

As mentioned above, you will be required to use the following outline exactly. Each section of the paper will have a Roman numeral and a section name (e.g., I. Introduction).

- I. Introduction (c. ½ page)

In this section, tell me exactly what you're going to do. Give an overview of where you are going with the rest of the paper. In particular, you must do two

things: first, define what the doctrine is that you'll be explaining and upholding; second, give me a preview of the subsequent sections of the paper. For example, you might say, "In this paper, I will explain and uphold the Son's eternal generation from the Father, which is the teaching that the Son eternally comes forth from the Father and, in so doing, receives from the Father the divine essence. In the subsequent sections of the paper, I will explain the exegetical basis for this doctrine, discuss theological questions, implications, and debates that help us to refine our understanding of the doctrine, answer two objections to the doctrine, and apply the doctrine to the Christian life."

II. Exegetical Basis (c. 3.5 pages)

In this section, explain how key scriptural texts teach or entail the particular doctrine you are working on. Offer brief exegeses of key texts, connecting them together where appropriate to show how they illumine one another. Show how the biblical material requires us to affirm the doctrine you are discussing.

III. Theological Questions, Implications, and Debates (c. 3.5 pages)

In this section, discuss how the exegetical material has given rise to certain theological questions, implications, and debates that enable clarification of the doctrine. You'll still need to be operating within the context of Scripture's teaching but with an eye on broader considerations in church history that lead to increased precision in doctrinal formulations over time. For example, how is the Son's eternal generation clarified through the debates about Arianism in the fourth century? How is the teaching of the Son's human faith on earth clarified through debates that theologians like Turretin engaged in during the seventeenth century?

IV. Potential Objections (c. 2 page)

In this section, pick out two potential objections to address. Through the reading material and the classroom discussion, you will become aware of potential objections. For example, if the Son is eternally generated by the Father, does that mean he is somehow less than the Father? If the Son has weaknesses, how was he able to fulfill his mission? After stating the objections fairly and clearly, offer your responses.

V. Application (1 page)

In this section, you will unpack some practical implications or points of application for the life of the church or the life of the Christian believer. There are many, many possibilities here. For example, how does the doctrine of eternal generation help us to trust that Jesus is the fullest revelation of what God is really like? Or, how does the doctrine of the Son's weaknesses assure us that he is a sympathetic high priest?

VI. Conclusion (c. ½ page)

(In this section, summarize what you've just done. You may consider ending with something like a comment on the glory of Christ or a nod toward how the church will continue to benefit from careful study of the Trinity and the person of Christ.)

IV. Resources, Footnotes, Bibliography

A. Resources

You will need to consult and cite a minimum of 10 different academic resources. You may use the required readings. For additional ideas, see the list of suggested resources below. Other options include biblical commentaries that will help you in the “Exegetical Basis” section.

B. Footnotes and Bibliography

The citation of sources should be done by using footnotes. A bibliography page should be added at the end of your paper (it will not count toward the total number of pages in your paper).

V. Submission

You will submit this paper as an email attachment by the end of the day on **July 31**, three weeks after the end of class.

VI. Grading

For grading purposes, the following aspects of the paper are worth the following points:

Structure, Formatting, Mechanics:	5 points
Introduction:	5 points
Exegetical Basis:	10 points
Theological Questions, etc.	10 points
Application of the Doctrine	10 points
Conclusion	5 points
Resources and Bibliography	5 points

COURSE WEEK SCHEDULE

Class meets July 6-July 10.

Monday, July 6

Topics: Prolegomena to Christology; Christology and Theology Proper

Readings: Van Dixhoorn, pp. 11-23; John of Damascus, 174-88, 190-1; Aquinas, *ST, Prima pars*, pp. 289-316, 333-41, 351-84, 405-12 (qq. 27-9, 32, 34-8, 40); Turretin (vol. 1), pp. 253-60, 278-302, 308-10; DUBY, chaps 1-2

Tuesday, July 7

Topics: *Pactum salutis*; Reason for the Incarnation; Hypostatic Union

Readings: Van Dixhoorn, pp. 25-7; John of Damascus, pp. 267-95, 337-9; Aquinas, *ST, Prima pars*, pp. 437-49 (q. 43); Aquinas, *ST, Tertia pars*, pp. 3-82, 259-65 (qq. 1-6, 24); Turretin (vol. 2), pp. 174-84, 299-321; Barth (IV.1), pp. 1-63 [3-66]; DUBY, chap. 3 and also pp. 141-65, 194-229

Wednesday, July 8

Topics: Grace of Christ; Knowledge, Wills, Power, Operations, Weaknesses

Readings: John of Damascus, pp. 295-328, Aquinas, *ST, Tertia pars*, pp. 83-179, 207-28 (qq. 7-15, 18-19); Turretin (vol. 2), pp. 347-52; Barth (IV.2), pp. 90-119 [88-116]; DUBY, pp. 229-42, 263-93

Thursday, July 9

Topics: *Communicatio idiomatum*; Mediatorial Office

Readings: Van Dixhoorn, pp. 197-200; John of Damascus, review pp. 275-7; Aquinas, *ST, Tertia pars*, pp. 181-206, 229-41, 277-80 (qq. 16-17, 20-1, 26); Turretin (vol. 2), pp. 321-32, 375-94; Barth (IV.1), pp. 150-204 [157-210]; (IV.2), pp. 66-90 [66-88] and review pp. 92-7 [90-5]; DUBY, pp. 165-91, 243-63, 293-314

Friday, July 10

Topics: Suffering and Death of Christ

Readings: Van Dixhoorn, pp. 148-54; John of Damascus, pp. 331-4; Aquinas, *ST, Tertia pars*, pp. 479-544, 553-66 (qq. 46-50, 52); Turretin (vol. 2), pp. 299-304, 352-64, 417-82; Duby, chap. 7

CONCLUDING ONLINE SCHEDULE

Please submit the reading and attendance report by email before the end of the day on **July 10**. Please submit the research paper by email before the end of the day on **July 31**.

SUGGESTED RESOURCES FOR RESEARCH PAPER

Primary Sources

Ambrose. *On the Christian Faith*. In vol. 10 of *NPNF²*, pp. 201-314.

Ames, William. *The Marrow of Theology*. Trans. John Dykstra Eusden. Durham: Labyrinth Press, 1983.

Athanasius. *Against the Arians*. In vol. 4 of *NPNF²*, pp. 306-447.

Athanasius. *On the Incarnation*. In vol. 4 of *NPNF²*, pp. 36-77.

Athanasius, and Didymus the Blind. *Works on the Holy Spirit*. Trans. Mark DelCogliano et al. Popular Patristics Series. Yonkers: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2011.

Augustine. *The Trinity*. Ed. John E. Rotelle. Trans. Edmund Hill. Works of Saint Augustine. Hyde Park: New City Press, 1991.

Cyril of Alexandria. *Three Christological Treatises*. Fathers of the Church 129. Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2014.

Gregory of Nazianzus. *On God and Christ: The Five Theological Orations and Two Letters to Cledonius*. Popular Patristics Series. Crestwood: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2002.

Gregory of Nyssa. *Against Eunomius*. In vol. 5 of *NPNF²*, pp. 35-314.

Gregory of Nyssa. *On "Not Three Gods"*. In vol. 5 of *NPNF²*, pp. 331-6.

- Hilary of Poitiers. *The Trinity*. Fathers of the Church 25. Washington, D. C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1954.
- Maximus the Confessor. *On the Cosmic Mystery of Jesus Christ*. Trans. Paul M. Blowers and Robert Louis Wilken. Popular Patristics Series. Crestwood: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2003.
- Owen, John. *The Glory of Christ*. Vol. 1 of *The Works of John Owen*. Ed. William H. Goold. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1965.
- Tanner, Norman P., ed. *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils – Volume One: Nicaea to Lateran V*. Washington, D. C.: Georgetown University Press, 1990.
- van Mastricht, Petrus. *Theoretical-Practical Theology*. Vols. 2, 4. Ed. and trans. Joel R. Beeke et al. Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage, 2019-23.

Secondary Sources

- Anatolios, Khaled. *Retrieving Nicaea: The Development and Meaning of Trinitarian Doctrine*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011.
- Ayres, Lewis. *Nicaea and Its Legacy: An Approach to Fourth-Century Trinitarian Theology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Bauckham, Richard. *Jesus and the God of Israel: God Crucified and Other Studies on the New Testament's Christology of Divine Identity*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008.
- Bird, Michael F. *Jesus the Eternal Son: Answering Adoptionist Christology*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2017.
- Capes, David B. *The Divine Christ: Paul, the Lord Jesus, and the Scriptures of Israel*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2018.
- Daley, Brian E. *God Visible: Patristic Christology Reconsidered*. Changing Paradigms in Historical and Systematic Theology. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018.
- Gathercole, Simon J. *The Pre-existent Son: Recovering the Christologies of Matthew, Mark, and Luke*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006.
- Emery, Gilles. *The Trinitarian Theology of St Thomas Aquinas*. Trans. Francesca Aran Murphy. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

- Emery, Gilles. *The Trinity: An Introduction to the Catholic Doctrine of the Triune God*. Trans. Matthew Levering. Washington, D. C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2011.
- Gavrilyuk, Paul L. *The Suffering of the Impassible God: The Dialectics of Patristic Thought*. Oxford Early Christian Studies. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Hurtado, Larry W. *Lord Jesus Christ: Devotion to Jesus in Earliest Christianity*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003.
- Jamieson, R. B. *The Paradox of Sonship: Christology in the Epistle to the Hebrews*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2021.
- Jamieson, R. B., and Tyler R. Wittman. *Biblical Reasoning: Christological and Trinitarian Rules for Exegesis*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2022.
- Legge, Dominic. *The Trinitarian Christology of St Thomas Aquinas*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017.
- McFarland, Ian A. *The Word Made Flesh: A Theology of the Incarnation*. Louisville: WJKP, 2019.
- McGuckin, John A. *St. Cyril of Alexandria, the Christological Controversy: Its History, Theology, and Texts*. Crestwood: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2004.
- Muller, Richard A. *Dictionary of Latin and Greek Theological Terms: Drawn Principally from Protestant Scholastic Theology*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2017.
- Sanders, Fred. *The Triune God*. New Studies in Dogmatics. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2016.
- Sanders, Fred, and Scott R. Swain, eds. *Retrieving Eternal Generation*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2017.
- Vidu, Adonis. *The Same God Who Works All Things: Inseparable Operations in Trinitarian Theology*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2021.
- Weinandy, Thomas G. *Jesus Becoming Jesus: A Theological Interpretation of the Synoptic Gospels*. Washington, D. C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2018.
- Weinandy, Thomas G. *Jesus: Essays in Christology*. Ave Maria: Sapientia Press, 2014.
- Wellum, Stephen J. *God the Son Incarnate: The Doctrine of Christ*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2016.

White, Thomas Joseph. *Incarnate Lord: A Thomistic Study in Christology*.

Washington, D. C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2015.

White, Thomas Joseph. *The Trinity: On the Nature and Mystery of the One God*.

Washington, D. C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2022.

Course Objectives Related to ThM* Student Learning Outcomes

Course: ST7610: Christology

Professor: Steven Duby

Campus: Orlando

Date: July 6-10, 2026

<u>ThM Student Learning Outcomes</u>		<u>Rubric</u>	<u>Mini-Justification</u>
<i>In order to measure the success of the ThM curriculum, RTS has defined the following as the intended outcomes of the student learning process. Each course contributes to these overall outcomes. This rubric shows the contribution of this course to the ThM outcomes.</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong • Moderate • Minimal • None 	
Articulation (oral & written)	Articulates knowledge, both oral and written, regarding advanced biblical, theological, and historical scholarship, demonstrating attention to details, concepts, methods, and frameworks.	Strong	There will be extensive in-class discussion about key topics and a research paper.
Primary Texts	Significant knowledge of, and skills to engage, primary texts within the student's chosen track (Bible or theology). This includes a demonstrated expertise in interpreting primary languages as appropriate (Bible = Greek and/or Hebrew; Theology = optional proficiency in a theological language)	Strong	Students will read almost all primary texts in various periods of church history.
Secondary Literature	Demonstrates a breadth of knowledge of and skill to research and engage critically with secondary literature related to the appropriate discipline.	Moderate	Students will read some secondary literature and engage some objections to key points in secondary literature while writing their paper.
Winsomely Reformed	Embraces a winsomely Reformed ethos. (Includes a charitable engagement with a wide variety of views, of those both inside and outside the Evangelical and Reformed perspectives)	Strong	Students will have an opportunity to read and to discuss and appreciate not only Reformed resources but also pre-Reformation resources and see how they do or do not align with Reformed commitments.