P50SF05 Theological Anthropology

Master of Theology Degree
Pacific Theological College
Semester 2B, 2018
Course Lecturer: Dr Richard Davis, Richard.Davis@ptc.ac.fj

Course Description

The understanding of what it means to be a human being is a central concern of ecumenical theology and ethics. This course will begin with Christian theological understandings of what a human being is from the biblical accounts of humans made in the image of God (imago Trinitatis), to the Fall, to the incarnation of God as human in Jesus Christ, and humanity's new status as the new Adam in Christ. It will trace traditions of theological reflection on the human creature through church history up to the modern period. Throughout the course, a Christian understanding of the human will enter into dialogue with other views of human nature from disciplines such as the sciences, the arts, economics, politics, world religions, and cultures, and ideologies such as feminism, socialism, and capitalism. Students who complete the course will have surveyed this important theological topic through some of the classic doctrines of theology, such as sin, soteriology, and the Trinity. They will be able to develop their own contextual theological anthropology as a critical tool in thinking theologically about contemporary social issues in the Pacific and beyond.

Objectives

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

- give an account of the importance of theological anthropology
- describe the issues surrounding the image of God
- relate sin to the human condition
- relate a theological understanding of the human to politics and economics
- understand the importance of the body to theological anthropology
- develop a contextual theological anthropology

Method of Teaching

A combination of lectures, readings, writing, and in-class discussions and presentations.

Textbook and Readings

There is no textbook for this class. A course reader with all required readings will be available from the PTC bookshop. This reader includes the World Council of Churches' publication Christian Perspectives on Theological Anthropology (Faith and Order Paper no. 199, 2005). This publication is also in the library and can be downloaded from http://bitly.com/FaithOrder199.

The lists of Further Optional Readings will usually include the sources used in the preparation of lectures, and can support students wanting to pursue topics further in essays.

Other works in Theological Anthropology that the library holds include:


There are also some other anthropological studies about the Pacific person:


**Note on Language:** It is old fashioned and now considered sexist to refer to humans as "men". In our own speech and writing it is considered good practice to use inclusive language, such as "humans", "humanity", or "men and women", instead of "man" or "mankind". Some older literature will use "man" and we need to read carefully to see whether the author means actual men or humans in general.

**Assessment**

In all assignments please use, as far as possible, primary sources when discussing someone's theology. If necessary you may quote from original sources from secondary sources, but I wish to see engagement with the unmediated ideas of theologians. Both assignments must have a completed "PTC Assignment Cover Sheet" attached to the front of the assignment. This can be obtained from http://ptc.ac.fj/?page_id=1136.

**Minor Assessment**

1) Class Presentation and Reading Report, 2000-2500 words (30% of final grade), due Friday of Assessment Week by 4pm to Dr Davis.

You will present to the class the **Required Readings** for a scheduled session (selected in agreement with Dr Davis). In the second half of that session you will present the readings in summary form, highlighting the key points, outlining the argument, giving your objections, and then raising some questions for group discussion. Time allowed for your presentation is 10-20 minutes, followed by discussion. Your presentation material must be written up as a Reading Report and handed in at the end of the Semester.
In-class presentation (worth 50% of the 30%) will be graded holistically according to the following criteria:

- **Accuracy**: Does the presentation accurately convey the meaning of the assigned text?
- **Priority**: Does the presentation accurately distinguish between the main ideas and ancillary details of the assigned text?
- **Criticism**: Does the presentation offer coherent criticisms and questions of the assigned material?
- **Clarity**: Is the presentation well organized and easy to understand?
- **Length**: Does the presentation keep within the specified time limit, being neither too short nor too long?
- **Fluency**: Does the presentation flow well and is it presented in an articulate manner?

### Major Final Assignment

2) 4000 words (70% of final grade), due Friday of Assessment Week (**2 November 2018**) by 4pm to Dr Davis.

You have been asked by your Church to write a report in response to the World Council of Churches paper *Christian Perspectives on Theological Anthropology* (reference above).

In writing your response you must draw on your theological understanding of the human person from the position of your Church and your context (however you define it). In this task you must identify points of agreement with the document, and points of disagreement, but at each stage your position must be backed up with reference to the sources of theology (such as course readings, other books, and the Bible), a close reading of the document itself, and your own cultural resources.

As this is a long document you might choose to discuss and reply to just a part of it. But whatever you chose to focus on, you must give brief reasons for doing so.

### Course Outline

This course is taught over seven weeks with two sessions a week.

#### Week 1 - Course Introduction (week beginning 10 September 2018)

**Session 1: Introduction to Theological Anthropology**

**Required Reading**

**Further Optional Reading**
Session 2: Introduction to Biblical Anthropology

Required Reading

Further Optional Reading

Week 2 - The Human Being (week beginning 17 September 2018)

Session 3: Human Ontology
Required Reading

Further Optional Reading
- Murphy, Nancey C. 2006. *Bodies and Souls, or Spirited Bodies?*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. [in library]
- Smail, Tom. 2006. *Like Father, Like Son: The Trinity Imaged in Our Humanity*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans. [in library]

Session 4: Human Freedom

Required Reading

Further Optional Reading

Week 3 - Humans as Creatures (week beginning 24 September 2018)

Session 5: Human Embodiment

Required Reading
Further Optional Reading

- Lambek, Michael and Andrew Strathern, eds. 1998. *Bodies and Persons: Comparative Perspectives from Africa and Melanesia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. [in library]

Session 6: Human Creatureliness

Required Reading


Further Optional Reading

Week 4 - Race, Gender, and Sexuality (week beginning 01 October 2018)

Session 7: Race and Ethnicity

Required Reading

Further Optional Reading

Session 8: Gender and Sexuality

Required Reading

Further Optional Reading
Minneapolis: Fortress.

**Week 5 - Work and Art (week beginning 08 October 2018)**

**Session 9: The Human Worker**

**Required Reading**

**Further Optional Reading**

Session 10: The Human Artist

Required Reading

Further Optional Reading
- Hanson, F. Allan and Louise Hanson. 1990. Art and Identity in Oceania. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press. [in library]

Week 6 - The Social and Political Animal (week beginning 15 October 2018)

Session 11: Politics and Human Nature

Required Reading

Further Optional Reading
Session 12: Economics and Human Nature

Required Reading

Further Optional Reading
- Daly, Herman E. and John B. Cobb, Jr. 1994. For the Common Good: Redirecting the Economy toward Community, the Environment, and a Sustainable Future. Boston: Beacon Press. Chapter 4: 'Misplaced Concreteness: Homo economicus' [in library]

Week 7 - Disability, Illness, and Death (week beginning 22 October 2018)

Session 13: Disability and Illness

Required Reading
- Thomas Aquinas. Summa Theologica, Q. 68, Art. 12 "Whether madmen and imbeciles should be baptized?" and Q. 80, Art. 9 "Whether those who have not the use of reason ought to receive this sacrament?"

Further Optional Reading
Session 14: Aging, Death, and Immortality

**Required Reading**

**Further Optional Reading**