

CT3029W Suffering, Faith and Theodicy

Offered: 2018: Semester 1

This unit proceeds on the premise that the Christian community must learn to speak responsibly about suffering: both the suffering in its midst and its being in the midst of suffering. We shall (i) critically examine some of the theodicies that have been proposed; (ii) enquire to what extent they are determined by the action of God's becoming incarnate; and (iii) explore the nature of faith faced with the realities to which theodicies have attempted to speak.

Upon successful completion of this unit, it is expected that students will be able to:

1. Identify the variety of 'theodicies' and 'anti-theodicies' proposed within the Christian tradition;
2. Demonstrate understanding of where the theological challenges lie in this complex matter;
3. Begin to articulate what an adequate Christian response to evil and suffering might consist of.

Prerequisites: 45 points in CT

Class Time: Three hours per week

Assessment: Critical reflections on weekly readings
(approximately 200 words each, two of which will be graded) (20%)
One seminar paper (1,500 words) (30%)
One essay (2,500 words) (50%)

Faculty: Jason Goroncy

Recommended Reading:

* = set texts recommended for purchase

Augustine. *On the Free Choice of the Will, On Grace and Free Choice, and Other Writings*, Cambridge Texts in the History of Philosophy. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Barth, Karl. *Church Dogmatics III.3*. Edited by Geoffrey W. Bromiley and Thomas F. Torrance. Translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley and R.J. Ehrlich. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1960.

Fiddes, Paul S. *The Creative Suffering of God*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988.

Forsyth, P.T. *The Justification of God: Lectures for War-Time on a Christian Theodicy*. London: Duckworth, 1916.

Hall, Douglas John. *God and Human Suffering: An Exercise in the Theology of the Cross*. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1986.

*Hick, John. *Evil and the God of Love*. 2 ed. London: Macmillan, 2010.

MacKinnon, Donald M. *Borderlands of Theology*. Edited by George W. Roberts and Donovan E. Smucker. Philadelphia/New York: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1968.

Moltmann, Jürgen. *The Crucified God: The Cross of Christ as the Foundation and Criticism of Christian Theology*. Translated by R. A. Wilson and John Bowden. London: SCM, 1974.

Sölle, Dorothee. *Suffering*. Translated by E. Kalin. London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1975.

Surin, Kenneth. *Theology and the Problem of Evil*, Signposts in Theology. Oxford/New York: Blackwell, 1986.

Weil, Simone. *Waiting for God*. Translated by Emma Craufurd. London: Harper Perennial, 2001.

Wolterstorff, Nicholas P. *Lament for a Son*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1987.