

# **Incarnation: Scripture, Theology, Ethics**

## **EPIP B539**

Fall 2017

Time: 10:00AM-11:00AM, Sundays

Room: Jones Hall

Facilitators: Brennan Breed and Benno Pattison

Email: [breedb@ctsnet.edu](mailto:breedb@ctsnet.edu)

### **1. Course Description**

Our focus question will be: What does God have to do with the world? We will think together about the relationship of divinity to stuff. Over the course of several months, we will consider biblical stories from creation to Jesus' birth and find insight from famous theologians from Deitrich Bonhoeffer to Hildegard of Bingen. In the spring, our class will study the Resurrection. Our focus question will be: What does God have to do with death and new life? We will ask what the Bible has to say about human mortality and God's power over life, and we will reconstruct the surprising history of the development of this central Christian idea.

### **2. Course Objectives**

At the completion of the semester, faithful and engaged participants will be able to articulate the ancient context of the concept "Incarnation." They will be able to describe in detail several different biblical conceptions of the relationship between divinity and materiality. They will also demonstrate the knowledge and skills that are required to read, interpret, and reflect theologically upon the literature of the biblical corpus and the Christian tradition. In order to meet that goal, attention must be given to several spheres; namely, the participants will be able to:

- 1) *critically engage* biblical and theological texts with the help of several scholarly methods,
- 2) *interpret* the texts from various ideological and theological vantage points,
- 3) *reflect* theologically upon these texts.

### **3. Textbooks**

*Web-based Resources:*

- Readings for the course will be available on the *Bible Odyssey* website and several others. Individual links to articles are listed below.

### **4. Requirements and Grading**

- There are no grades for this course. You couldn't possibly pay me enough.

### **5. Additional Notes**

1. Because Epiphany's "Bible and Theology" class is a community of theological inquiry and formation in the service of the Church of Jesus Christ, it is incumbent upon both the facilitator and participants to foster a teaching environment that is conducive for learning and characterized by mutual respect. To ensure that all participants can give their undivided attention to the instruction at hand, maintaining proper classroom etiquette is crucial. This would include, for example, silencing cell phones during class time and refraining from distracting behavior such as computer activity unrelated to classroom learning.
2. I will to the use of inclusive language about human beings and about God. Inclusive language with reference to human beings intentionally seeks to acknowledge the diversity of humankind. Inclusive language with reference to God seeks to express the diverse ways the Bible and our theological tradition speak about God. In both cases, such language should enable everyone, regardless of differences such as gender, age, and race, to feel included, addressed, and equally valued before God.

# Class Schedule

## 1. August 27: YOUTH PRESENTATION

## 2. September 3: Incarnation: An Introduction

## 3. September 10: TBA

## 4. September 17: Incarnation in the Ancient World: Creation Myths

### (a) Suggested Primary Reading:

- a. Genesis 1-3
- b. Proverbs 8:22-31
- c. Enuma Elish, ancient Babylonian Creation Story: <http://www.ancient.eu/article/225/>
- d. Memphite Theology: an ancient Egyptian Creation story:  
[http://www.csun.edu/~rlc31920/documents/History%20110/Theology\\_of\\_Memphis.pdf](http://www.csun.edu/~rlc31920/documents/History%20110/Theology_of_Memphis.pdf)

### (b) Suggested Secondary Reading:

- a. "Two Creations in Genesis," *Bible Odyssey*  
(<https://www.bibleodyssey.org/passages/related-articles/two-creations-in-genesis>)
- b. "The Creation of Animals," *Bible Odyssey*  
(<https://www.bibleodyssey.org/passages/related-articles/creation-of-the-animals>)
- c. "The First Creation," *Bible Odyssey* (<https://www.bibleodyssey.org/passages/main-articles/first-creation>)
- d. "Created in the Image of God," *Bible Odyssey*  
(<https://www.bibleodyssey.org/passages/related-articles/created-in-the-image-of-god>)

## 5. September 24: Incarnation in the Old Testament: The Development of YHWH

### (a) Suggested Primary Reading:

- a. Exodus 33
- b. Ezekiel 1
- c. Psalm 82

### (b) Suggested Secondary Reading:

- a. "What Does Yahweh Look Like?," *Bible Odyssey*  
(<https://www.bibleodyssey.org/passages/related-articles/what-did-yahweh-look-like>)
- b. "Ark of the Covenant," *Bible Odyssey* (<https://www.bibleodyssey.org/people/related-articles/ark-of-the-covenant>)
- c. "Monotheism in the Hebrew Bible," *Bible Odyssey*  
(<https://www.bibleodyssey.org/people/related-articles/monotheism-in-the-hebrew-bible>)

## 6. October 1: Incarnation in the New Testament: Incarnation in the Gospels

### (a) Suggested Primary Reading:

- a. Mark 1
- b. Luke 1-2
- c. Matthew 1-2
- d. John 1

### (b) Suggested Secondary Reading:

- a. "Jesus," *Bible Odyssey* (<http://www.bibleodyssey.org/people/main-articles/jesus.aspx>)
- b. "Did the Authors of the Gospels Know Each Other?" *Bible Odyssey*  
(<http://www.bibleodyssey.org/tools/bible-basics/did-the-authors-of-the-canonical-gospels-know-each-other.aspx>)
- c. "Good News," *Bible Odyssey* (<http://www.bibleodyssey.org/tools/ask-a-scholar/good-news-of-the-nt.aspx>)
- d. "God So Loved the World," Dorothy Lee, *Bible Odyssey*  
<http://www.bibleodyssey.org/passages/main-articles/john-three-sixteen>
- e. "The Jewish Context of Jesus," Amy-Jill Levine, *Bible Odyssey*  
(<http://www.bibleodyssey.org/places/main-articles/kingdom-of-israel.aspx>)

**7. October 8: Incarnation and the Liturgy**

**8. October 15: Incarnation in the New Testament: Incarnation in the Pauline Epistles**

(a) Suggested Primary Reading:

- a. 1 Thessalonians 1
- b. 1 Corinthians 1
- c. Philippians 2
- d. Romans 8
- e. Colossians 1

(b) Suggested Secondary Reading:

- a. "Paul," *Bible Odyssey* (<http://www.bibleodyssey.org/people/main-articles/paul.aspx>)
- b. "Greco-Roman Jesus," *Bible Odyssey* (<http://www.bibleodyssey.org/people/related-articles/greco-roman-jesus.aspx>)

**9. October 22: Incarnation in the Early Church: A Fight over God, Bodies, and Stuff**

(a) Suggested Secondary Reading:

- a. "On the Incarnation," Jacob Prahlow (<https://pursuingveritas.com/2015/05/29/on-the-incarnation/>)

**10. October 29: KANUGA RETREAT**

**11. November 5: Incarnation and the Cosmos: Creation, Science, and the Environment**

(a) Suggested Primary Reading:

- a. Genesis 1-2
- b. Colossians 1
- c. John 1

(b) Suggested Secondary Reading:

- a. William P Brown, "Let there be light! The Genesis of Biblical Cosmology," *Journal of Cosmology* 9 (2010) (<http://journalofcosmology.com/AncientAstronomy111.html>)
- b. Richard Bauckham, "The Incarnation and the Cosmic Christ" ([http://www.augsburgfortress.org/media/downloads/9781451465402\\_Excerpt%20from%20Chapter%201.pdf](http://www.augsburgfortress.org/media/downloads/9781451465402_Excerpt%20from%20Chapter%201.pdf))
- c. Lecture by Fr. Richard Rohr, "Cosmic Christ" (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4LYQQO5uFtA>)

**12. November 12: Incarnation and the Arts**

(a) Suggested Primary Reading:

- a. Mark 12:13-17
- b. John 3:11-14
- c. 1 Corinthians 15:42-49
- d. 2 Corinthians 3:12-18
- e. Colossians 1:15; 3:10

(b) Suggested Secondary Reading:

- a. Leo O'Donovan, S.J., "Experiencing the Incarnation through Art," *America: The Jesuit Review* (<https://www.americamagazine.org/issue/holy-framing>)
- b. Kathleen Housey, "A Conversation with Jeremy Begbie," *Image* 85 (<https://www.imagejournal.org/article/a-conversation-with-jeremy-begbie/>)

**13. November 19: Incarnation and Contemplation**

(a) Suggested Secondary Reading:

- a. Emmanuel da Silva e Araujo, "Ignatian Spirituality as a Spirituality of the Incarnation" (<http://www.theway.org.uk/Back/4712araujo.pdf>)

**14. November 26: Incarnation and the Human Body: Evolutionary Biology**

(a) Suggested Secondary Reading:

- a. Joel C. Daniels, "Christology, Evolution, and Cultural Change," *Anglican Theological Review* 96 <http://www.anglicantheologicalreview.org/static/pdf/articles/daniels.pdf>
- b. Celia Deane-Drummond, "What Can Evolutionary Biology Contribute to Theology, and Vice Versa?" *Big Questions Online* 2016  
<https://www.bigquestionsonline.com/2016/05/12/what-can-evolutionary-biology-contribute-theology-vice-versa/>
- c. Lecture by Celia Deane-Drummond: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dtkKtb5OpmA>

**15. December 3: The Incarnation and the Human Body: Race and Racism**

(a) Suggested Primary Reading:

- a. Genesis 9-10
- b. Galatians 3
- c. Acts 10

(b) Suggested Secondary Reading:

- a. M. Shawn Copeland, "Scripture and Ourselves: Reflections on the Bible and the Body," *America: The Jesuit Review* (<https://www.americamagazine.org/issue/213/scripture-and-our-selves>)
- b. "Paul's Letters and Modern Race Relations," Love Sechrest, *Bible Odyssey* (<http://bibleodyssey.com/en/tools/video-gallery/p/pauls-letters-and-modern-race-relations-sechrest>)
- c. Felicia Lee, "From Noah's Curse to Slavery's Rationale," *New York Times* Nov 1, 2003 (<http://www.nytimes.com/2003/11/01/arts/from-noah-s-curse-to-slavery-s-rationale.html>)

**16. December 10: ST. NICHOLAS**

**16. December 17: A History of Advent: The Bifurcated Season of Preparation**

(a) Suggested Primary Reading:

- a. Matthew 3
- b. Mark 1
- c. Mark 13

(b) Suggested Secondary Reading:

- a. Fr. Bob Styles, "Advent" (<https://fatherbobsj.wordpress.com/2016/11/12/advent-2/>)

***FINAL PAPERS DUE Monday, December 18 at 12:00PM.  
Just kidding.***