
WYT 2308H
Dimensions of Hope: Exploring Eschatology
Winter, 2017 (online)

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Course Prerequisites WYT1101H or other introduction to Systematic Theology

Description

This course explores Christian hope in its personal, corporate, and cosmic dimensions through listening to the witness of the Scriptures and the early church, and through critical engagement with contemporary conversations about eschatology and hope. Topics to be covered include life after death, bodily resurrection, heaven, hell, the questions of universal salvation and of purgatory, the *parousia*, the Millennium, interpreting the book of Revelation, the destiny of the cosmos, and the contemporary in-breaking of hope in the church and the world. These topics will be explored through weekly readings, online conversation, and two short papers.

Course Methodology

Each week the instructor will post a brief lecture introducing the topics and readings, and outlining one or two questions for consideration.

1. Reading Responses. Students will submit reading notes to the instructor by noon on Monday for each week of the course. The purpose of these notes is to prepare the students to engage in online discussion. These notes should consist of two or three descriptive bullet points for each of the readings, identifying particularly significant aspects of the reading. In addition, there should be two or three evaluative bullet points for each reading, identifying problematic issues or questions about the author's position. Both descriptive and evaluative bullet points should be *points* – a couple of sentences at most, not full-blown paragraphs or mini-essays. **(20% of final grade)**

2. Online conversation. Online conversation will be a key element to this course. Students will be assigned to discussion groups of 3 to 5 persons. Each week one of the group members will initiate discussion of the week's topic with a post of approximately 500 words to the discussion group. This will

count as one of their three contributions to the overall discussion. Each member of the group must contribute at least three substantive comments to the discussion. One of these contributions should be in response to the initial post, and two others in response to other student comments. Posts should be detailed, informed by the reading, and assist in moving the conversation forward. Each post should be between 250 and 500 words. **(40% of final grade)**

3. Mid-Term Short Paper. The mid-term paper will focus on some aspect of the course in relation to Paul’s discussion of eschatological themes in 1 Corinthians 15. **(2500 words; Due February 27; 20% of final grade)**

4. Final Short Paper. The final paper will explore an aspect of the course in relation to one or more of the eschatological statements of the Nicene Creed, or another topic chosen in consultation with the instructor. **(2500 words; Due April 10; 20% of final grade)**

5. Course Evaluation. Students will be required to submit a course evaluation prior to receiving their grade for the course. As always, the professor does not see the evaluation until he has submitted the grade to the college registrar, and does not ever see the name of the person who has written the evaluation.

Assignments (reading notes and papers) are to be submitted electronically in Word, not pdf.

The instructor will respond to email questions concerning the course within 24 hours, and will be available for skype conversations, online chat, or immediate email response during online office hours for three hours each week.

Course Outcomes

| By the end of the course, students will: | This outcome will be achieved by these course elements: | This course outcome corresponds to this aspect of Wycliffe’s statement of MTS and MDiv outcomes: |
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| Identify and assess various approaches to interpreting Biblical texts with a view to giving a Biblical grounding to Christian hope. | - Readings and reading notes - Online discussion - Mid-term paper | MTS: 1.1 and 1.2 MDiv: 1.1 and 1.2 |
| Identify and assess diverse understandings of Christian hope in the patristic and modern periods, including differences between Christian traditions. | - Readings and reading notes - Online discussion - Short papers | MTS: 1.4 and 1.5 MDiv: 1.4 and 1.5 |
| Articulate an understanding of Christian hope for the future that is pastorally sensitive, biblically grounded and critically engaged with respect to eschatological issues such as life after | - Readings and reading notes - Online discussion - Short papers | MTS: 1.3, 2.1, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3 MDiv: 1.3, 2.1, 2.2 |

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| <p>death, bodily resurrection, heaven, hell, and the questions of universal salvation and of purgatory, the <i>parousia</i>, the Millennium, interpreting the book of Revelation, and the destiny of the cosmos, and the contemporary in-breaking of hope in the church and the world.</p> | | |
| <p>Analyze and assess assigned readings, and engage in critical and respectful discussion of these readings in an online learning environment.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Readings and reading notes - Online discussion - Short papers | <p>MTS: 2.3 MDiv: 2.2</p> |

Course Resources

- Hans Schwarz, *Eschatology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000). *NB*: This book has gone to print-on-demand. **The *Crux* bookstore at Wycliffe will order sufficient copies for those registered in the course, so don't wait until the last minute to order a copy.**
- N. T. Wright, *Surprised by Hope: Rethinking Heaven, the Resurrection, and the Mission of the Church* (Harper One, 2008).
- Additional readings will be available online through the course website.

Course Website

- Blackboard <https://weblogin.utoronto.ca/>

This course uses Blackboard for its course website. To access it, go to the UofT portal login page at <http://portal.utoronto.ca> and login using your UTORid and password. Once you have logged in to the portal using your UTORid and password, look for the **My Courses** module, where you'll find the link to the website for all your Blackboard-based courses. (Your course registration with ROSI gives you access to the course website at Blackboard.) Note also the information at <http://www.portalinfo.utoronto.ca/content/information-students>. Students who have trouble accessing Blackboard should ask Thomas Power for further help.

Course Schedule

Unit 1 (January 3 - 6): Introduction

- Wright, 3 – 30

Unit 2 (January 9 – 13): OT & Apocalyptic

- Schwarz, 1-60
- Adela Yarbro Collins, "Apocalyptic Themes in Biblical Literature," *Interpretation* 53.2 (Apr 1999), 117-130

Unit 3 (January 16 – 20): Roots of Christian Hope

- Schwarz, 61-103
- Wright, 31 – 76

Unit 4 (January 23 – 27): Christian Hope in the Modern World

- Schwarz, 105-172
- Wright, 79 – 91

Unit 5 (January 30 – February 3): Death – a bed of hope?

- Schwarz, 247-280
- Wright, 93-122

Unit 6 (February 6 – 10): Bodily Hope: Resurrection

- Schwarz, 280-290
- Wright: 123-163
- Gijbert van den Brink, "How to speak with intellectual and theological decency on the resurrection of Christ?: A comparison of Swinburne and Wright," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 61.4 (2008), 408-419

Unit 7 (February 13 – 17): Time of Hope – Envisioning Continuing existence?

- Schwarz, 290-307
- Nicholas Lash, "Eternal Life: Life 'after' Death?," *The Heythrop Journal* 19.3 (1978) 271-284
- Brian Hebblethwaite, "Time and Eternity and Life 'After' Death," *the Heythrop Journal* 20.1 (1979), 57-62
- Nicholas Lash, "Time and Eternity and Life 'After' Death: A Comment," *The Heythrop Journal* 20.1 (1979), 63-64
- Ted Peters, "Eschatology: Eternal Now or Cosmic Future?" *Zygon* 36.2 (June 2001), 349-356.

Reading Week (February 20 – 24)

Mid Term Paper Due: February 27

Unit 8 (February 27 – March 3): Parousia and Judgment, Hell, Universalism

- Schwarz, 337-351, 387-404
- Wright, 165-186
- George Hunsinger, "Hellfire and Damnation: Four Ancient and Modern Views," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 51.4 (November 1998), 406-434

Unit 9 (March 6 – 10): Intermediate Spaces of Hope - Purgatory, Paradise

- Schwarz, 352-364
- Miroslav Volf, "The final reconciliation: reflections on a social dimension of the eschatological transition," *Modern Theology* 16.1 (January 2000), 91-113
- Jerry Walls, "His Mercy Endures Forever—Even beyond the Grave?," *Heaven, Hell, and Purgatory: A Protestant View of the Cosmic Drama* (Brazos, 2015), 187-212

Unit 10 (March 13 – 17): Millennial Hope

- Schwarz, 309-337
- Ian Boxall, "The Apocalypse Unveiled: Reflections on the Reception History of Revelation," *The Expository Times* 125:6 (2014), 261-271
- Richard Bauckham, "The Millennium," in *God will be all in all: The Eschatology of Jürgen Moltmann* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1999), 123-148
- Jürgen Moltmann, "The hope of Israel and the Anabaptist alternative," in *God will be all in all: The Eschatology of Jürgen Moltmann* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1999), 149-154

Unit 11 (March 20 – 24): Ecclesial Hope

- Schwarz, 365-386
- Wright, 189-232
- Joseph L. Mangina, "God, Israel, and Ecclesia in the Apocalypse," in Richard Hays & Stefan Alkier (eds) *Revelation and the Politics of Apocalyptic Interpretation* (Waco: Baylor University, 2012), 85-104

Unit 12 (March 27 – 31): Cosmic Hope

- Wright, 233 – 289
- Peter Scott, "The Future of Creation: Ecology and Eschatology," in David Fergusson and Marcel Sarot (eds) *The Future as God's Gift: Explorations in Christian Eschatology* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000), 89-114

Evaluation

- Reading notes (Weekly; 20%)
- Online discussion (Weekly; 40%)
- Mid-term paper (2500 words; Due February 27; 20%)
- Final paper (2500 words; Due April 10; 20%)

Grading System

| Letter Grade | Numerical Equivalent | Grade Point | Grasp of Subject Matter |
|--------------|----------------------|-------------|-------------------------|
| A+ | 90 – 100% | 4.0 | Profound & Creative |
| A | 85 – 89% | 4.0 | Outstanding |
| A- | 80 – 84% | 3.7 | Excellent |
| B+ | 77 – 79% | 3.3 | Very Good |
| B | 73 – 76% | 3.0 | Good |
| B- | 70 – 72% | 2.7 | Satisfactory |
| FZ | 0 – 69% | 0 | Failure |

Please see the appropriate handbook for more details about the grading scale and non-numerical grades (e.g. SDF, INC, etc).

Policy on Assignment Extensions

Students are expected to hand in assignments by the date given in the outline. Basic Degree students are expected to complete all course work by the end of the term in which they are registered. Under **exceptional circumstances**, with the written permission of the instructor, students may request an extension (SDF = “standing deferred”) beyond the term. An extension, when offered, will have a mutually agreed upon deadline that does not extend beyond the conclusion of the following term. An SDF must be requested no later than the last day of classes of the term in which the course is taken. The request form is available on the college website or from the Registrar’s office.

One percentage point per day will be deducted on the course grade if an extension has not been requested by the stated deadline.

Course grades. Consistently with the policy of the University of Toronto, course grades submitted by an instructor are reviewed by a committee of the instructor’s college before being posted. Course grades may be adjusted where they do not comply with University grading policy (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/grading.htm>) or college grading policy.

Policies

Accessibility. Students with a disability or health consideration are entitled to accommodation. Students must register at the University of Toronto’s Accessibility Services offices; information is

available at <http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca/>. The sooner a student seeks accommodation, the quicker we can assist.

Plagiarism. Students submitting written material in courses are expected to provide full documentation for sources of both words and ideas in footnotes or endnotes. Direct quotations should be placed within quotation marks. (If small changes are made in the quotation, they should be indicated by appropriate punctuation such as brackets and ellipses, but the quotation still counts as a direct quotation.) Failure to document borrowed material constitutes plagiarism, which is a serious breach of academic, professional, and Christian ethics. An instructor who discovers evidence of student plagiarism is not permitted to deal with the situation individually but is required to report it to his or her head of college or delegate according to the TST *Basic Degree Handbook* (linked from <http://www.tst.edu/content/handbooks>) and the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?did=4871>. A student who plagiarizes in this course. Students will be assumed to have read the document “Avoidance of plagiarism in theological writing” published by the Graham Library of Trinity and Wycliffe Colleges (http://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/Library_Archives/Theological_Resources/Tools/Guides/plag.htm).

Other academic offences. TST students come under the jurisdiction of the University of Toronto Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>).

Writing Style. The writing standard for the Toronto School of Theology is Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations*, 8th edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), which is available at Crux Books.
