

INTRODUCTION TO THE THEOLOGY OF PAUL TILlich – IF 573

“Take courage, my son, your sins are forgiven.”

From Matthew 9:2

Read through the syllabus slowly and VERY carefully. To help you easily reference different topics throughout the term, the following table of contents are hyperlinks to different parts of the documents. Click on them to skip to the part of the syllabus you need. Also, any underlined word in the document is a hyperlink to related section or to external websites.

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PROFESSOR'S CONTACT INFORMATION

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- Authorpage: <http://facebook.com/thesynapticgospel>
- Shared blog: <http://itself.wordpress.com>

I will checking LTS Online email daily and will respond to requests there as well. At the latest, you can expect a reply from me within 24 hours if you send the email Mon-Thursday, and a reply on Monday if you email Fri-Sunday.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is an introduction to the ideas of the Christian philosopher and theologian Paul Tillich. Emphases for this introduction will be focused upon being comfortable with the theological language of Tillich's writings and contextualizing his ideas into ministerial contexts.

COURSE GOALS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. **Intellectual:** As a course focused upon a major thinker in the canon of the Christian intellectual tradition, this course will expand the student's knowledge of this intellectual tradition in substantive ways, engaging philosophical and theological vocabularies.
2. **Practical:** The student will make explicit practical connections between the life of the mind and the life of ministerial practice, and will perform an act of fundamental practical theology indicative of the "praxis-theory-praxis" model.

3. **Spiritual:** By studying Tillich, a theologian whose ideas push its audience out of comfort zones of tradition, the student will be invited to reflect upon his or her own continuing faith formation.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

1. Paul Tillich, *Dynamics of Faith*.
2. Paul Tillich, *The Irrelevance and Relevance of the Christian Message*.
3. Paul Tillich, *The Shaking of the Foundations*.
4. Other materials provided by the instructor:
 1. Selections from *The New Being*.
 2. Selections from *The Eternal Now*.
 3. Tillich, "The Significance of the History of Religions for the Systematic Theologian."
 4. "The Nemesis Hex" by the instructor (from *Retrieving the Radical Tillich*).

CLASS PROCEDURES

- **Lessons**

The course is divided into a number of lessons. The primary emphasis of the course will be upon lecture, discussion, and professional application. As you progress through the lessons, you **MUST** mark each element as completed before you move on. This will track your progress for both your own reference and for the professor's grading purposes. Do **NOT** skip around to and fro among the lessons, unless individual instructions allow it. Progress in order and stay on pace with the rest of the class. Notice in the schedule that the beginning and ending dates for lessons within a module overlap. This is intentional: you can begin reading assignments and watching presentations while finishing up the discussions of the previous lesson. Topics include:

- o Basic concepts, philosophical-theological vocabulary, and theological biography of Paul Tillich
- o Models of God in Tillich's theological corpus
- o Introducing existentialism as a philosophical movement and Tillich's location and contributions to the movement
- o The difference between philosophy and theology in Tillich's thought
- o Tillich's new directions—"the Religion of the Concrete Spirit"—at his death
- o Two key texts for pastoral reflection: *Dynamics of Faith* and *The Irrelevance and Relevance of the Christian Message*

- **Discussion Forums**

You will participate in discussion boards, which will open and close at designated times throughout the course. On the first day, you should write a 250+ word self-introduction for Discussion Board I. Thereafter, discussion boards should be focused upon various course materials and activities. Plan to write 100-250 words per day on every day that a discussion board is open. Feel free to ask other questions but your primary task is to stick to the course materials. Weekend contributions are not required but will be counted until the instructor evaluates the discussion board; conversations may continue on discussion boards after evaluation but the instructor will primarily respond and engage the current discussion board.

- **Sermon Projects**

You will write two sermons that engage Tillich’s ideas in a substantive and relevant way. After your sermon, please write a short, 2-3 page theological reflection on this sermon and contextualize your use of Tillich’s theology. Be sure to refer primarily to assigned readings and secondarily to class activities.

- **Final Essay**

At the end of the course you will write a short, 4-5 page essay exploring the relationship between having a working theology and homiletical practice. Use course materials, especially Tillich’s sermons in *The Shaking of the Foundations*. What does it, or could it mean for you specifically to think of the practice of preaching as an experimental or experiential theological laboratory?

- **Class meetings**

Class meetings are optional and are for the benefit of the students. Come prepared with questions or issues you wish to discuss from the course; there is not a planned lecture or specific content delivered apart from the students’ wishes.

- **Exceptions**

If you are not in the M.Div. or a ministry training program and wish to have a different assignment than ones centered on pastoral practice, please contact the instructor at the beginning of the course.

WEIGHT OF ASSIGNMENTS IN GRADING

Mentor Connection to Course	5%
Discussion Board I (Introduction)	10%
Discussion Board II	10%
Discussion Board III	10%
Discussion Board IV	10%
Discussion Board V	10%
Sermon Project #1	15%
Sermon Project #2	15%
Final Essay	15%

COURSE POLICIES

Please refer to the LTS Common Syllabus.

SCHEDULE

WEEK 1 – <i>Dynamics of Faith, part I</i>		
Monday	August 3	<p>READING – Tillich, <i>Dynamics of Faith</i>, introduction; “Yes and No” (from <i>The New Being</i>).</p> <p>LECTURES – “Professor Introduction” and “Introduction to Paul Tillich”</p> <p>DISCUSSION BOARD I – Self-introduction assignment</p>
Tuesday	August 4	<p>READING – Tillich, <i>Dynamics of Faith</i>, chapter I.</p> <p>DISCUSSION BOARD II – opens, discuss readings, lectures.</p>
Wednesday	August 5	<p>READING – Tillich, <i>Dynamics of Faith</i>, chapter II; “The New Being” (from <i>The New Being</i>).</p> <p>DISCUSSION BOARD II – continues.</p>
Thursday	August 6	<p>READING – Tillich, <i>Dynamics of Faith</i>, chapter III.</p> <p>DISCUSSION BOARD II – continues.</p>
Friday	August 7	<p>READING – Tillich, <i>Dynamics of Faith</i>, chapter IV.</p> <p>DISCUSSION BOARD II – closes.</p> <p><i>Please note: The instructor will be traveling over this weekend and will have limited email access.</i></p>
WEEK 2 – <i>Dynamics of Faith, part II</i>		
Monday	August 10	<p>READING – <i>Dynamics of Faith</i>, chapter V.</p> <p>LECTURE – “Is Bad Philosophy Good Theology?”</p> <p>CLASS MEETING – 10 AM (EST), using Fuzebox</p> <p>DISCUSSION BOARD III – opens, discuss readings and lectures.</p>
Tuesday	August 11	<p>READING – <i>Dynamics of Faith</i>, chapter VI.</p> <p>DISCUSSION BOARD III – continues.</p>

Wednesday	August 12	READING – <i>Dynamics of Faith</i> , conclusion. DISCUSSION BOARD III – continues.
Thursday	August 13	READING – “The Good I Will, I Do Not” and “The Eternal Now” (from <i>The Eternal Now</i>) LECTURE – “Tillich’s Theology of Culture and the Protestant Principle” OPTIONAL READING – <i>Irrelevance and Relevance</i> introduction by A. Durwood Foster. DISCUSSION BOARD III – closes.
Friday	August 14	Work on Sermon project READING – <i>Irrelevance and Relevance</i> , opening (p.1), chapter 1.

WEEK 3 – <i>The Irrelevance and Relevance of the Christian Message</i>		
Monday	August 17	READING – <i>Irrelevance and Relevance</i> , chapter 2. DISCUSSION BOARD IV – opens.
Tuesday	August 18	READING – <i>Irrelevance and Relevance</i> , chapter 3 DISCUSSION BOARD IV – continues.
Wednesday	August 19	READING – <i>Shaking of the Foundations</i> , ch. 1, 2, 15 (“The Theologian”) LECTURE – “Existentialism and Existential Courage” DISCUSSION BOARD IV – continues.
Thursday	August 20	READING – <i>Shaking of the Foundations</i> , ch. 3-5 (esp. “The Paradox of the Beatitudes”). DISCUSSION BOARD IV – continues. LECTURE – “The Religion of the Concrete Spirit”
Friday	August 21	READING – <i>Shaking of the Foundations</i> , ch. 6-7, 10 (esp. “The Depth of Existence”). DISCUSSION BOARD IV – closes.

WEEK 4 – <i>The Shaking of the Foundations</i>		
Monday	August 24	<p>COURSE MEETING – 10 AM (EST), using Fuzebox.</p> <p>DUE – Sermon #2</p> <p>READING – <i>Shaking of the Foundations</i>, ch. 11-13 (esp. “The Yoke of Religion”).</p> <p>LECTURE – “A Pantheon of Theisms”</p> <p>DISCUSSION BOARD V – opens.</p>
Tuesday	August 25	<p>READING – <i>Shaking of the Foundations</i>, ch. 14-16</p> <p>DISCUSSION BOARD V – continues.</p>
Wednesday	August 26	<p>READING – <i>Shaking of the Foundations</i>, ch. 17-19 (esp. “You are Accepted”).</p> <p>LECTURE – “Tillich’s Theological Legacy”</p> <p>DISCUSSION BOARD V – continues.</p>
Thursday	August 27	<p>READING – <i>Shaking of the Foundations</i>, ch. 20-22 (esp. “Born in the Grave.”).</p> <p>OPTIONAL READING – “The Nemesis Hex”</p> <p>DISCUSSION BOARD V – continues.</p>
Friday	August 28	<p>Work on final essay</p> <p>READING – “The Significance of the History of Religions for the Systematic Theologian” (from <i>The Future of Religions and Christianity and the Encounter of World Religions</i>)</p> <p>DISCUSSION BOARD V – closes.</p> <p>DUE SATURDAY, AUGUST 29, MIDNIGHT: Final essay</p>