



# TS101 Introduction to Christian Theology

Dr Tan Seng Kong | 3CR

## About the Course

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As an introductory course on Christian theology, the content of our faith will be understood in the context of 'the one, holy, catholic (i.e. universal), and apostolic church' as confessed in the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed (AD 381). The lectures will follow the overall Trinitarian structure of the Creed, and where applicable, read in light of the Protestant-Reformation heritage. Weekly sessions will involve reading, reflection and response to topical readings, both primary and secondary.

<b>Credits</b>	<b>Fees*</b>
3CR	S\$450(Credit) S\$240 (Audit)
<b>Class Format</b>	* Alumni are entitled to 10% discount on audit course(s)
Online	

## About the Lecturer

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**Dr Tan Seng Kong** is our Lecturer of Systematic and Spiritual Theology. He is a graduate from Regent College, Vancouver (MA, Spiritual Theology). Seng Kong completed his PhD in Systematic Theology at Princeton Theological Seminary, where he focused his research on Jonathan Edwards' doctrine of salvation. Seng Kong was trained as an architect and with his family, worships at Bethel Assembly of God.



## Course Objectives

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The course aims to:

- Introduce the basic content of Christian orthodoxy as encapsulated in the ecumenical creeds and/or confessional statements
- Introduce the distinctive Protestant contributions to the great Tradition
- Encourage self-knowledge through careful analysis and deeper appreciation of one's own denominational/ecclesial tradition and of the diversity within the great Tradition
- Demonstrate the inseparable nature of spiritual-theological reflection and Christian living, particularly as expressed through one's vocational calling

# Course Outline & Resources

## VIDEO LECTURES & ACTIVITIES

For each topic, the relevant video lectures can be accessed through the video links provided on the course Moodle site. At the end of each set of video lectures, the necessary lecture activities (lecture MCQ questions and/or online reflections) should be completed before proceeding to the next topic.

## REQUIRED READING

All required readings are from Migliore, Daniel L. *Faith Seeking Understanding: An Introduction to Christian Theology* and McGrath, Alister E. *Christian Theology: An Introduction*. Please see the Course Bibliography below for more details. Articles can be accessed from the links provided in the course Moodle site, or downloaded in PDF form (if available).

S/N	Lecture Topic	Activities	Required Reading
1	Introduction	Lecture MCQ Questions 1  Online Reflection 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Statement of Faith 1: The Apostles' Creed</i><sup>1</sup></li> <li>● <i>Reading 1a: Excerpts from Martin Luther, 'Experience Makes a Theologian'</i><sup>2</sup></li> <li>● <i>Reading 1b: Kolden, 'Luther on Vocation'</i><sup>3</sup></li> <li>● <i>Textbook Reading: McGrath, ch. 7, 'Knowledge of God', pp. 152-170</i></li> </ul>
2	The Living God: Divine Unity and Attributes	Lecture MCQ Questions 2  Online Reflection 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Statement of Faith 2: Westminster Confession of Faith, ch. 2, 'Of God, and of the Holy Trinity'</i></li> <li>● <i>Reading 2a: Thomas Weinandy, 'Does God Suffer?'</i><sup>4</sup></li> <li>● <i>Reading 2b: J. Todd Billings, 'Undying Love'</i><sup>5</sup></li> <li>● <i>Textbook Reading: McGrath, ch. 9, 'The Doctrine of God', pp. 197-212</i></li> </ul>
3	The Living God: God the Trinity	Lecture MCQ Questions 3  Online Reflection 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Statement of Faith 3: The Athanasian Creed</i></li> <li>● <i>Reading 3a: John Wesley, 'Sermon 55: On the Trinity'</i></li> <li>● <i>Reading 3b: Harrower, 'A Trinitarian Doctrine of Christian Vocation', pp. 218-228</i></li> <li>● <i>Textbook Reading: McGrath, ch. 10, 'The</i></li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> With these two questions in mind: What are the motifs and emphases found in the (1) Great Tradition, (2) Reformation doctrines, and (3) your denominational theologians and documents that have particular import to faith and vocation? Where are the areas of lack and how can we enrich our own ecclesial tradition by revisiting the past, critically appropriating the present, and/or learning from another tradition?

<sup>2</sup> Ch. 2 in Andrew J. B Cameron and Brian S Rosner, *The Trials of Theology: Becoming a "Proven Worker" in a Dangerous Business* (Fearn, Ross-shire, Scotland: Christian Focus Pub., 2010)., 25-30.

<sup>3</sup> Marc Kolden, "Luther on Vocation," *Word & World* 3, no. 4 (1983): 383-84.

<sup>4</sup> "Does God Suffer?," *First Things*, accessed January 21, 2016, <http://www.firstthings.com/article/2001/11/does-god-suffer>.

<sup>5</sup> "In Our Suffering, We Find Comfort in God's Impassibility," *First Things*, accessed January 21, 2016, <http://www.firstthings.com/article/2014/12/undying-love>.

			Doctrine of the Trinity', pp. 234-264
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4	God the Father: Divine Creation, Preservation and Providence	Lecture MCQ Questions 4  Online Reflection 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Statement of Faith 4: 'The Creator'</i>, para. 4 of the <i>Catechism of the Catholic Church</i></li> <li>● <i>Reading 4: Kolden, 'Work and Meaning'</i>, pp. 262-271<sup>6</sup></li> <li>● <i>Textbook Reading: McGrath, ch. 9, 'The Doctrine of God'</i>, pp. 212-227</li> </ul>
5	God the Son: Humanity and Sin	Lecture MCQ Questions 5  Online Reflection 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Statement of Faith 5a: The Council of Orange</i></li> <li>● <i>Statement of Faith 5b: The Augsburg Confession, arts. 18, 19 and 20, 'Of Free Will', 'Of the Cause of Sin', and 'Of Good Works'</i></li> <li>● <i>Reading 5: Sands, 'The Imago Dei as Vocation'</i>, pp. 28-41<sup>7</sup></li> <li>● <i>Textbook Reading: McGrath, ch. 14, 'The Doctrines of Human Nature, Sin, and Grace'</i>, pp. 348-374</li> </ul>
6	God the Son: The Identity of Christ	Lecture MCQ Questions 6  Online Reflection 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Statement of Faith 6: The Council of Chalcedon</i></li> <li>● <i>Reading 6a: Jonathan Edwards, 'The Excellency of Christ'</i>, pp. 563-594</li> <li>● <i>Reading 6b: Ward, 'Performing Christ'</i>, pp. 323-334<sup>8</sup></li> <li>● <i>Textbook Reading: McGrath, ch. 11, 'The Doctrine of the Person of Christ'</i>, pp. 265-294</li> </ul>
7	God the Son: The Mission of Christ	Lecture MCQ Questions 7  Online Reflection 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Statement of Faith: The Nicene Creed</i></li> <li>● <i>Reading 7a: Jonathan Edwards, 'Christ's Sacrifice'</i></li> <li>● <i>Reading 7b: Athanasius, 'On the Incarnation of the Word'</i>, sects. 19-32<sup>9</sup></li> <li>● <i>Reading 7c: Wright, 'Following Jesus in a Globalised Marketplace'</i>, pp. 320-330<sup>10</sup></li> <li>● <i>Textbook Reading: McGrath, ch. 13, 'The Doctrine of Salvation in Christ'</i>, pp. 315-347</li> </ul>

<sup>6</sup> Marc Kolden, "Work and Meaning: Some Theological Reflections," *Interpretation* 48, no. 3 (July 1994): 262–71.

<sup>7</sup> Paul Sands, "The Imago Dei as Vocation," *Evangelical Quarterly* 82, no. 1 (January 2010): 28–41.

<sup>8</sup> Graham Ward, "Performing Christ: The Theological Vocation of Lay People," *Ecclesiology* 9, no. 3 (2013): 323–34, doi:10.1163/17455316-00903004.

<sup>9</sup> Athanasius of Alexandria, "On the Incarnation of the Word," in Philip Schaff, *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, Second Series, Vol. 4: St. Athanasius - Select Works and Letters* (Grand Rapids Mich.: Eerdmans, 1978).

<sup>10</sup> Christopher Wright, "Following Jesus in the Globalized Marketplace," *Evangelical Review of Theology* 31, no. 4 (2007)

8	<p>God the Son:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● James Torrance, 'Prayer as Communion: Participating in Grace in the Triune Life of God'</li> <li>● James Torrance, 'Prayer and the Priesthood of Christ' (pt. 1)</li> <li>● James Torrance, 'Prayer and the Priesthood of Christ' (cont.)</li> </ul>	<p>Online Reflection 8</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Statement of Faith 8: The Augsburg Confession, art. 4, 'Justification'</i></li> <li>● <i>Reading 8a: James B. Torrance, 'The Sole Priesthood of Christ, the Mediator of Worship'</i><sup>11</sup></li> <li>● <i>Reading 8b: R. Paul Stevens, 'Going Deep', pp. 125-142</i><sup>12</sup></li> </ul>
9	<p>God the Holy Spirit: The Identity of the Holy Spirit</p>	<p>Lecture MCQ Questions 8</p> <p>Online Reflection 9</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Statement of Faith 9: The Nicene Creed</i></li> <li>● <i>Reading 9a: Gregory of Nazianzen, 'On the Holy Spirit'</i></li> <li>● <i>Reading 9b: Miller, 'Analysing and Understanding the Faith at Work Movement', pp. 125-142</i></li> <li>● <i>Textbook Reading: McGrath, ch. 9, 'The Doctrine of God', pp. 227-232</i></li> </ul>
10	<p>God the Holy Spirit: The Mission of the Holy Spirit</p>	<p>Lecture MCQ Questions 9</p> <p>Online Reflection 10</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Reading 10a: Wesley, 'The Repentance of Believers' (1767)</i></li> <li>● <i>Reading 10b: Stortz, 'Purpose-Driven or Spirit-Led', pp. 403-412</i></li> <li>● <i>Textbook Reading: Migliore, ch. 10, 'The Holy Spirit and the Christian Life', pp. 232-258</i></li> </ul>
11	<p>The Church: The Sacraments (3 parts)</p>	<p>Lecture MCQ Questions 10</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Statement of Faith 11a: The Second Helvetic Confession (1566), chs. 19-21, 'Of the Sacraments of the Church of Christ', 'Of Holy</i></li> </ul>

<sup>11</sup> Ch. 2 in James Torrance, *Worship, Community & the Triune God of Grace* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1996). The late Professor James B. Torrance (1923-2003) taught systematic theology at the University of Aberdeen. He studied under Karl Barth in Basel and delivered the 1994 Didsbury Lectures, published as *Worship, Community, and the Triune God of Grace*.

<sup>12</sup> Ch. 5 in R. Paul Stevens, *Doing God's Business: Meaning and Motivation for the Marketplace* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2006).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Introduction and the East</li> <li>● Roman Catholicism</li> <li>● Reformation</li> </ul>	Online Reflection 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Baptism', and 'Of the Holy Supper of the Lord'</li> <li>● <i>Statement of Faith 11b</i>: 'Eucharistic Doctrine' (1<sup>st</sup> Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission, 1971)</li> <li>● <i>Reading 11</i>: Watkins, 'Mass, Mission and Eucharistic Living', pp. 440-455<sup>13</sup></li> <li>● <i>Textbook Reading</i>: McGrath, ch. 16, 'The Doctrine of the Sacraments', pp. 400-423</li> </ul>
12	<p>The Church: The Nature of the Church</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Greg Peters, 'On Ecclesiology'</li> <li>● Greg Peters, 'The Nature and Purpose of the Church'</li> </ul>	Online Reflection 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Statement of Faith 12</i>: 'Unity Statement Revised' (Busan, Korea: World Council of Churches, 10<sup>th</sup> Assembly, 2013)</li> <li>● <i>Reading 12</i>: Johnson, 'Toward a Marketplace Missiology', pp. 87-97<sup>14</sup></li> <li>● <i>Textbook Reading</i>: McGrath, ch. 15, 'Doctrine of the Church', pp. 375-399</li> </ul>
12	<p>The Last Things</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Mark Saucy, 'The Kingdom of God'</li> <li>● Mark Saucy, 'Cosmic and Individual Eschatology'</li> </ul>	Online Reflection 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Statement of Faith 13a</i>: The Westminster Confession of Faith, chs. 32 and 33, 'Of the State of Men after Death, and of the Resurrection of the Dead', and 'Of the Last Judgment'</li> <li>● <i>Statement of Faith 13b</i>: 'Eschatology: The Doctrine of Last Things' (Presbyterian Church [USA], 118<sup>th</sup> Assembly, 1978)</li> <li>● <i>Reading 13</i>: Christensen, 'Marketplace and Missional Church', pp. 13-18<sup>15</sup></li> <li>● <i>Textbook Reading</i>: McGrath, ch. 18, 'The Last Things: Christian Hope', pp. 444-464</li> </ul>

## Course Requirements

1. **Video lecture MCQ questions:** Complete all video lecture MCQ questions.
2. **Online reflections:** Complete all online reflections (150 words each). Readings will include primary theological sources, like the ecumenical creeds and ecclesial confessions, as well as writings of individual theologians. These primary readings will be read in conjunction with relevant and practical secondary readings that focus on vocation and the marketplace. Answer the questions for each online reflection.

<sup>13</sup> Clare Watkins, "Mass, Mission, and Eucharistic Living," *The Heythrop Journal* 44, no. 4 (October 2003): 440-55, doi:10.1111/1468-2265.00233.

<sup>14</sup> C Neal Johnson, "Toward a Marketplace Missiology," *Missiology: An International Review* 31, no. 1 (2003): 87-97.

<sup>15</sup> Derek Christensen, "Marketplace and Missional Church," *Stimulus: The New Zealand Journal of Christian Thought & Practice* 13, no. 1 (February 2005): 13-18.

3. **Book chapter review:** Students should choose any chapter from Migliore’s *Faith Seeking Understanding* for this exercise. The choice excludes ch. 1 (‘The Task of Theology’), ch. 10 (‘The Holy Spirit and the Christian Life’), and appendices A-D. The elected chapter should not overlap with the topic chosen for the integration/reflection paper. For example, if ch. 8 (‘The Person and Work of Jesus Christ’) is chosen for review, then the Integration-Reflection Paper should not cover Christology. The review should be no more than 1000 words in length. The contents will include:

- (a) A summary of the key points of the chosen chapter;
- (b) An in-depth interaction with one thesis/motif/theme, stating point/s where you are both critical of and sympathetic with the author; and,
- (c) Arguments (biblical, theological, philosophical, etc.) supporting why you agree and disagree with the author.

4. **Integration-Reflection Paper:** Choose ONE systematic locus (for our purposes, subdivided into the doctrines of God, creation, human beings and sin, Jesus Christ, Holy Spirit, church and final things) and write a 3,500-word integration-reflection paper. The paper will:

- (a) Relate the chosen doctrine to a conciliar statement, preferably to your own ecclesiastical or denominational statement of faith;
- (b) Develop on the systematic theme/s with further input from relevant theological literature; and,
- (c) State your own view with argument and reflect on the significance of your position for Christian faith and vocation (in about 500-750 words).

## ASSIGNMENTS BREAKDOWN

S/N	Assignments	Grade Percentage
1	Video Lecture MCQ Questions	10%
2	Online Reflections	30%
3	Book Chapter Review	15%
4	Integration-Reflection Paper	45%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

## GUIDELINES FOR ESSAY-WRITING

1. The paper must reflect graduate-level research skills. There must be a minimum of five sources in your bibliography (not including the Bible).
2. The paper must reflect academic integrity in that due credit must be given to every source quoted or used. Footnotes should be used to document the sources. Every source cited should also appear in the bibliography. Please abide by the Turabian or Chicago Style for all your footnoting and bibliography.
3. The paper must reflect a good command of English and organisation of thought. Writing must be concise and clear. Please proof-read your paper before submitting it.
4. The paper must reflect the customary hallmarks of academic writing: treat those who hold different opinions from you with respect, and avoid colloquialisms and slang.

## COURSE ASSIGNMENT POLICIES

1. For **style and formatting** of assignments, please refer to the section on “General Formatting for all Assignments” available on the BGST Online Student Manual.
2. ALL assignments are to be submitted by uploading via Moodle. Alternatively, assignments can be sent via email to [assignments@bgst.edu.sg](mailto:assignments@bgst.edu.sg) without the need to cc. the lecturer (unless requested by the lecturer).
3. Students must submit all their assignments **6 months** after the course registration date

Students are advised that BGST **strongly discourages plagiarism**. For more information on this point (what plagiarism is, how BGST penalises it), please consult the BGST ‘Guidelines for Academic Papers’.

## Course Bibliography

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### REQUIRED READINGS

#### Core Texts

- \*Migliore, Daniel L. *Faith Seeking Understanding: An Introduction to Christian Theology*. 3rd ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014.
- \*McGrath, Alister E. *Christian Theology: An Introduction*. 5th ed. Chichester, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011.

### RECOMMENDED READINGS

#### Systematic Theologies

- Berkhof, Louis. *Systematic Theology*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996.
- Bloesch, Donald. *Essentials of Evangelical Theology*. Harper & Row, 1978.
- Bray, Gerald. *God is Love: A Biblical and Systematic Theology*. Crossway, 2012.
- Frame, John M. *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Christian Belief*. P&R Publishing, 2013.
- Grenz, Stanley. *Theology for the Community of God*. Broadman and Holman, 1994.
- Grudem, Wayne. *Bible Doctrine*. IVP, 1999.
- Grudem, Wayne. *Systematic Theology*. Zondervan, 1994.
- Horton, Michael. *The Christian Faith: A Systematic Theology for Pilgrims on the Way*. Zondervan, 2011.

Kelly, Douglas F. *Systematic Theology*. Volume 1. *The God who is the Holy Trinity*. Mentor, 2009.

Kelly, Douglas F. *Systematic Theology*. Volume 2. *The Beauty of Christ: A Trinitarian Vision*. Mentor, 2014.

Milne, Bruce. *Know The Truth*. IVP, 1998.

Packer J. I. *Concise Theology*. USA: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2001.

### 3R Sources

Cameron, Andrew J. B, and Brian S Rosner. *The Trials of Theology: Becoming a "Proven Worker" in a Dangerous Business*. Fearn, Ross-shire, Scotland: Christian Focus Pub., 2010.

Catholic Church, and David Konstant. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. London [u.a.: Burns & Oates, 2004.

Christensen, Derek. "Marketplace and Missional Church." *Stimulus: The New Zealand Journal of Christian Thought & Practice* 13, no. 1 (February 2005): 13–18.

"Does God Suffer?" *First Things*. Accessed January 21, 2016.  
<http://www.firstthings.com/article/2001/11/does-god-suffer>.

Harrower, Scott. "A Trinitarian Doctrine of Christian Vocation." *Evangelical Review of Theology* 39, no. 3 (July 2015): 218–28.

"In Our Suffering, We Find Comfort in God's Impassibility." *First Things*. Accessed January 21, 2016.  
<http://www.firstthings.com/article/2014/12/undying-love>.

Johnson, C Neal. "Toward a Marketplace Missiology." *Missiology: An International Review* 31, no. 1 (2003): 87–97.

Kolden, Marc. "Luther on Vocation." *Word & World* 3, no. 4 (1983): 383–84.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Work and Meaning: Some Theological Reflections." *Interpretation* 48, no. 3 (July 1994): 262–71.

Miller, David W. *God at Work: The History and Promise of the Faith at Work Movement*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Sands, Paul. "The Imago Dei as Vocation." *Evangelical Quarterly* 82, no. 1 (January 2010): 28–41.

Schaff, Philip. *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, Second Series, Vol. 4 : St. Athanasius - Select Works and Letters*. Grand Rapids Mich.: Eerdmans, 1978.

Schaff, Philip, Henry Wace, Cyrillus, and Gregorius. *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church. Vol. 7, Vol. 7,.* Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1978.



- Stevens, R. Paul. *Doing God's Business: Meaning and Motivation for the Marketplace*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2006.
- Stortz, Martha Ellen. "Purpose-Driven or Spirit-Led: A Spirituality of Work or the Work of the Spirit?" *Word & World* 25, no. 4 (September 2005): 403–12.
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- Wright, Christopher. "Following Jesus in the Globalized Marketplace." *Evangelical Review of Theology* 31, no. 4 (2007): 320.