



The mission of McMaster Divinity College is to develop effective evangelical Christian leaders for the Church, academy, and society through graduate-level education, spiritual development, and vocational formation.

I. Faculty Information



Name: Dr. Clement Wen

Office hours: Room 210, T/R 11:00-13:00 or by appointment
(Zoom appointments are also available by request)

Email: wenc20@mcmaster.ca

II. Course Description

What is the grace of salvation and how does it work itself out in the Christian life? This question provides orientation to a course which unfolds the notion of (redemptive) grace through theological exploration of subjects like human sin and its consequences, the atonement, justification, sanctification, the future glorification of not only humanity but also of all creation, and most important, how these salvific realities of grace are, even now, participated in Christ, by the Spirit, to the Father in an “already, but not yet” way. Course delivery will be by way of in person lectures, student presentations, and group discussions of select reading materials.

III. Course Objectives

With respect to MDC’s transformational paradigm of “Knowing...Being...Doing,” by the end of the course, students will:

Knowing (K)

- Demonstrate a working knowledge of essential figures, themes, and concepts as well as a familiarity with ongoing discussions and debates regarding different aspects of the soteriological notion of grace and their implications for Christian life and ministry.

Being (B)

- Cultivate further awareness of the limits of one’s own theological positions, so as to be self-aware of the continual need for humility and a pastoral dialogical posture with regard to theological engagement, even while having the courage to maintain theological convictions.
- Appropriate such developing convictions about “grace and the Christian life” to oneself so as to “be transformed by the renewing of your mind” (cf. Romans 12:2).

Doing (D)

- Use their own words to explain relevant concepts and their significance concerning the subject of “grace and the Christian life.”
- Engage critically and constructively with the essential discussions and themes which have to do with the aforementioned theological loci—this in a manner that authentically and credibly reflects the grace of the gospel in our contemporary world.

IV. Course Resources

All required and recommended books for this class are available from the Hurlburt Family Bookstore located beside the entrance to the Nathaniel H. Parker Memorial Chapel of McMaster Divinity College. To purchase in advance, you may contact the bookstore manager, Bernice Quek, by phone at 416.620.2934 or 416.668.3434 (mobile); or by email at books@readon.ca. The Hurlburt Family Bookstore also carries other books and merchandise and is open throughout the academic year during posted hours.

While students are strongly encouraged to purchase the required books for the course, I have made every effort to ensure that all of the required readings chosen are available full text through McMaster Divinity College’s different online databases (or by way of other free resources that are available online). A select bibliography of recommended resources can also be found below.

Required Reading

Eilers, Kent and Kyle C. Strobel, eds. *Sanctified by Grace: A Theology of the Christian Life*. London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2014. [\[DTL\]](#)

Green, Gene L., Stephen T. Pardue, and K. K. Yeo, eds. *Majority World Theology: Christian Doctrine in Global Context*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2020. **Please note:** The only required reading section for this course is Part Four: *So Great a Salvation: Soteriology in the Majority World* (this part was originally published as a stand-alone book by Eerdmans and then Langham in 2017; if you are able to find a new or used copy of the stand-alone book to borrow or purchase instead, that would be perfectly fine as the content is the same). [\[DTL\]](#)

Hastings, W. Ross. *Total Atonement: Trinitarian Participation in the Reconciliation of Humanity and Creation*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books/Fortress Academic, 2019. [\[DTL\]](#)

Recommended Resources

Alexander, Donald L., ed. *Christian Spirituality: Five Views of Sanctification*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988. [\[DTL\]](#)

Balthasar, Hans Urs von. *Prayer*. Translated by Graham Harrison. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1986. [\[DTL \(different version and translation\)\]](#)

Barnes, M. Craig. *The Pastor as Minor Poet: Texts and Subtexts in the Ministerial Life*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009. [\[DTL\]](#)

Barth, Karl. *Prayer*. 50th anniversary edition. Edited by Don E. Sailiers. Translated by Sara F. Terrien. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002. [\[DTL\]](#)

- Canlis, Julie. *Calvin's Ladder: A Theology of Ascent and Ascension*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2010. [[Mills Library](#)]
- Christensen, Michael J. and Jeffrey A. Wittung, eds. *Partakers of the Divine Nature: The History and Development of Deification in the Christian Traditions*. Reprint; Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2008. [[DTL](#), [Mills Library 1](#), [Mills Library 2](#)]
- Coffey, David. *Grace: The Gift of the Holy Spirit*. Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 2011. [[DTL](#)]
- Davis, Joshua B. *Waiting and Being: Creation, Freedom, and Grace in Western Theology*. Emerging Scholars. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2013. [[DTL](#)]
- Dieter, Melvin E., et al. *Five Views on Sanctification*. Counterpoints. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1987. [[DTL](#)]
- Dunning, H. Ray. *Grace, Faith, and Holiness: A Wesleyan Systematic Theology*. Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press, 1988. [[DTL](#)]
- Fairbairn, Donald. *Grace and Christology in the Early Church*. Oxford Early Christian Studies. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003. [[DTL](#)]
- Ferguson, Sinclair B. *The Christian Life: A Doctrinal Introduction*. Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1989. [[Mills Library](#)]
- Fiddes, Paul S. *Participating in God: A Pastoral Doctrine of the Trinity*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2000. [[DTL](#)]
- Foster, Richard J. *Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth*. Special anniversary edition. New York: Harper Collins, 2018. [[DTL](#)]
- Foster, Richard J. *Prayer: Finding the Heart's True Home*. 10th anniversary edition. San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1992. [[DTL](#)]
- Hastings, W. Ross. *Jonathan Edwards and the Life of God: Toward an Evangelical Theology of Participation*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2015. [[DTL](#)]
- Hill, Charles E. and Frank A. James, III, eds. *The Glory of the Atonement: Biblical, Theological, and Practical Perspectives*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2004. [[DTL](#)]
- Horton, Michael S. *Justification*. 2 vols. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2018. [[DTL](#) [v1](#), [v2](#)]
- Kapic, Kelly M., ed. *Sanctification: Explorations in Theology and Practice*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2014. [[DTL](#)]
- Knell, Matthew. *Sin, Grace and Free Will: A Historical Survey of Christian Thought*. 2 vols. Cambridge: James Clarke & Co, 2018. [[DTL](#) [v1](#), [v2](#)]
- Lane, A. N. S. *Justification by Faith in Catholic-Protestant Dialogue: An Evangelical Assessment*. London: T&T Clark, 2006. [[DTL](#)]
- McGrath, Alister E. *Iustitia Dei: A History of the Christian Doctrine of Justification*. 4th edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020. [[DTL](#)]

- Nouwen, Henri J. *The Wounded Healer: A Story of Homecoming*. Reprint; New York: Image Books, 2013. [\[DTL\]](#)
- Oakes, Edward T. *A Theology of Grace in Six Controversies*. Interventions. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2016. [\[DTL\]](#).
- Packer, J. I. *Keep In Step with the Spirit: Finding Fullness in Our Walk with God*. 2nd edition. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2020. [\[DTL\]](#).
- Packer, J. I. *A Quest for Godliness: The Puritan Vision of the Christian Life*. Wheaton, IL Crossway, 1990. [\[Mills Library\]](#).
- Palmer, Parker J. *The Active Life: A Spirituality of Work, Creativity, and Caring*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1990. [\[Mills Library\]](#)
- Palmer, Parker J. *Let Your Life Speak: Listening for the Voice of Vocation*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000. [\[DTL\]](#).
- Peterson, Eugene H. *Practice Resurrection: A Conversation on Growing Up in Christ*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000. [\[DTL\]](#).
- Peterson, Eugene H. *Working the Angles: The Shape of Pastoral Integrity*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1987. [\[DTL\]](#).
- Schmiechen, Peter. *Saving Power: Theories of Atonement and Forms of the Church*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005. [\[Mills Library\]](#).
- Stackhouse, John G., Jr., ed. *What Does It Mean to be Saved? Broadening Evangelical Horizons of Salvation*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2002. [\[DTL\]](#).
- Stevens, R. Paul. *The Other Six Days: Vocation, Work, and Ministry in Biblical Perspective*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999. [\[DTL\]](#)
- Stevens, R. Paul Stevens and Michael Green. *Living the Story: Biblical Spirituality for Everyday Christians*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003. [\[DTL\]](#)
- Smith, Gordon T. *Beginning Well: Christian Conversion and Authentic Transformation*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001. [\[DTL\]](#)
- Stott, John R. W. *The Cross of Christ*. 20th anniversary edition. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006. [\[DTL\]](#)
- Ware, Kallistos. *The Orthodox Way*. Revised edition. Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1995. [\[DTL\]](#)
- Webber, Robert E. *The Divine Embrace: Recovering the Passionate Spiritual Life*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2006. [\[DTL\]](#)
- Willard, Dallas. *The Divine Conspiracy: Rediscovering Our Hidden Life in God*. San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1998. [\[DTL\]](#)
- Ziegler, Gordie W. *Trinitarian Grace and Participation: An Entry into the Theology of T. F. Torrance*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2017. [\[DTL\]](#)

V. Course Grading Scale and Activity/Assignment Weights

Grading Scale

Percent Grade	*Letter Grade	Grade Point (12pt scale)	Grade Point (4pt scale)	Grading Guidelines
90–100	A+	12	4.0	for work displaying mastery of the subject matter, creativity, and individualized integration of insights and their relationship(s)
85–89	A	11	4.0	
80–84	A-	10	3.7	
77–79	B+	9	3.3	for work displaying a good level of competence and comprehension
73–76	B	8	3.0	
70–72	B-	7	2.7	
67–69	C+	6	2.3	for work which meets basic course requirements but demonstrates a low level of comprehension
63–66	C	5	2.0	
60–62	C-	4	1.7	
57–59	D+	3	1.3	for work that falls below minimum standards
53–56	D	2	1.0	
50–52	D-	1	0.7	
0–49	F	0	0	unsatisfactory work and/or failure to meet course requirements

*Note that in order to earn credit for this course, you must pass with a grade higher than a D+ (i.e., C- or better). Please see the appropriate handbook for more information about the grading scale, esp. if you are an Advanced Elective (e.g., DPT) student.

Assignment Category Weights

Category	Weight
Class Attendance and Participation	10%
Eilers/Strobel & Green/Pardue/Yeo Reading Journal	20%
Atonement Paper	20%
Oral Presentation of Research	15%
Critical-Constructive Research Paper	35%
	100%

VI. Course Requirements and Expectations

Advanced Elective Students: Students taking this course for Advanced Elective credit (e.g., DPT) will be provided with a syllabus supplement outlining additional requirements that they must meet to receive credit towards their degree program. Advanced Elective students can expect their course requirements to include doctoral levels of reading and research-supported writing, as well as a presentation of their research in a format appropriate to the course. For any questions about what to expect for Advanced Elective requirements in this particular course, please contact the course instructor. **Note:** The syllabus supplement will be made available no sooner than ten days after enrollment in the course. Advanced Elective students are encouraged to register for this course as early as possible so as to ensure that they are made aware of their course requirements well in advance of the course start date.

Expectations and Requirements for ALL STUDENTS Regardless of Program or Specialization

– Class Attendance and Participation (10% of Final Grade)

As graduate-level students, you will be expected to attend all classes in person and actively participate in the interactive portions of the course. By way of in-class lectures and discussion, this component of the course incorporates all three categories of our course objectives as knowledge is built upon (K), the transformational cultivation of both humility and courage of conviction is exemplified in our interactions (B), and as the use of one's own words to express theological ideas and their significance as well as to critically and constructively engage in theological discussion is practiced (D). Due to the give-and-take nature of theological discussions, it is inevitable that there will be differing opinions that are held and expressed. While students (and instructor) are allowed to sincerely express their honest views, it is expected that such will be done respectfully, especially amidst instances of controversy and/or disagreement. As the course instructor, it is my responsibility to manage the classroom environment so that the classroom is a safe place for respectful theological conversation. In instances where an individual is dominating the discussion, I also reserve the right to ask them to take a step back for the purpose of allowing others ample opportunity to participate. Students who violate our classroom guidelines may be dismissed from class.

– Eilers/Strobel & Green/Pardue/Yeo Reading Journal (20% of Final Grade)

Writing about what we are reading is one of the most important, if not primary, ways that can aid the absorption of knowledge (K), the cultivation of a humble theological tone as well as courage of conviction (B), and the use of one's own words to explain theological content and their significance while also critically and constructively engaging that content (D). For this class, writing about what we are reading should also comment upon how the theological content about "grace and the Christian life" is personally shaping and transforming our developing perspectives and lived lives (B). **Students are thus asked to keep a "Reading Journal" in which they freely reflect upon what they found to be most interesting and/or poignant in the Eilers/Strobel and Green/Pardue/Yeo books.** While there is no upper limit with regard to how much may be written for each book, the minimum per book is 1,000 words in a manner that meticulously conforms to the [MDC style guide](#) (in this regard, the "Reading

Journal” should be a singular document which contains the written reflections for both books; for entries longer than 1,500 words, I will stop reading around the 1,500 word mark; thus the ideal cumulative word count for the document when both entries are included should be 2,000-3,000 words). **The “Reading Journal” is due on or before 10:00pm, Friday, December 6th via the [A2L](#) course website. Those who submit an early draft of their “Reading Journal” on or before 10:00pm, Friday, November 22nd will receive a tentative grade along with formative feedback which can guide revisions for a final draft.** More information about this assignment will be given on the first day of class.

– *Atonement Paper (20% of Final Grade)*

A paper of 2,500-3,000 words which meticulously follows the [MDC style guide](#) is to be written about how the atonement and its differing dimensions of grace relates to your program’s specialization (CC, CW) and/or to your own personal sense of vocational calling. While your essay can allude or build off of other primary and secondary sources if desired (i.e., such outside research beyond the assigned readings is not required), there should be evidence of critical and constructive engagement with the assigned text by Hastings (*Total Atonement*) and the paper should clearly argue a main thesis from beginning to end (with a proper “thesis statement” explicitly included in the introduction section of the paper). The atonement paper assignment fulfills the course objectives of demonstrating key knowledge (K), allowing opportunity to further cultivate a humble theological posture, yet at the same time maintaining courage of theological convictions (B), and the use of one’s own words to explain theological content and its significance while also entering into critical and constructive engagement of that content (D). Comment upon how the reflections given about the atonement are personally transformative for you may also be included towards the end of the paper (B).

An “Atonement Paper Checklist” will be made available via the course’s [A2L](#) site and more information about this assignment will be given on the first day of class.

- **10:00pm on Friday, October 11, 2024:** a full first draft of the atonement paper is due via the course’s [A2L](#) site so that I have the opportunity to give you formative feedback along with an initial grade for the assignment.
- **10:00pm on Friday, November 8, 2024:** the final draft of the atonement paper is due via the course’s [A2L](#) site for those interested in making revisions to their earlier submitted first draft, as per the formative feedback received.

– *Oral Presentation of Research (15% of Final Grade)*

– *Critical-Constructive Research Paper (35% of Final Grade)*

A critical-constructive research paper of 3,750-5,000 words which meticulously follows the [MDC style guide](#) can be on anything that is of interest to the student so long as it has something to do with the course content (i.e., grace and the Christian life), so long as it is not about the atonement (as a separate required assignment covering this topic is already in place), and so long as it clearly argues a main thesis from beginning to end (with a proper “thesis statement” explicitly included in the introduction section of the paper). The research paper assignment fulfills the course objectives of demonstrating key knowledge (K), allowing transformational opportunity to further cultivate a humble theological posture, yet at the same time maintaining courage of theological convictions (B), and the use of one’s own words to explain theological

content and its significance while also entering into critical and constructive engagement of that content (D).

While a more comprehensive list of suggested topics for this research paper will be provided via the course's [A2L](#) site, *students who wish to write about something else should ask the instructor for permission prior to writing the paper or its proposal*. Along such lines, research questions should be framed in a way that leads to critical-constructive argumentation (e.g., “Which view of nature and grace is more convincing, John Calvin’s or John Wesley’s, and what are the constructive implications for a robust theological anthropology?”) rather than merely description (e.g., “What was John Calvin’s view of nature and grace?”).

In terms of program specializations, the following are examples of research questions which can be written about:

- CC: How might a robust theology of grace in some or all of its participatory “phases” (e.g., justification, sanctification, glorification, etc.) influence the way in which we live and engage the modern economic order?
- CW: How might a robust theology of grace in some or all of its participatory “phases” (e.g., justification, sanctification, glorification, etc.) inform a sense of Christian identity that differs from what other contemporary worldviews offer?

For professional students, a *minimum* of 8-10 academic sources should be consulted (e.g., peer-reviewed books, chapters from edited volumes, journal articles, etc., and not devotional books, blog posts, Wikipedia, etc.) and along with footnotes, a full bibliography is to be included at the end of the paper which is inclusive of every source cited within the paper while *not including* sources which were not cited in the paper. (Research program students should consult a minimum of 18-20 academic sources.)

A “Research Paper Checklist” will be made available via the course’s [A2L](#) site and more information about this assignment will be given on the first day of class. In the meantime, please keep in mind the following key dates:

- **10:00pm on Friday, October 18, 2024:** a research paper proposal of at least one paragraph that speaks to your proposed research question, tentative thesis statement, and motivation for research is to be submitted via the course’s [A2L](#) site along with a tentative bibliography at the end of the same document.
- **10:00pm on Friday, November 22, 2024:** a full first draft of the research paper is due via the course’s [A2L](#) site so that I have the opportunity to give you formative feedback along with an initial grade for the assignment.
- **Tuesdays during class time on November 26th, December 3rd and 10th:** students will be assigned one of these three dates to orally present about their research papers to others in the class. The grade given for the oral presentations will be based upon overall preparedness whose quality of presentation style and theological content reflects the course objectives of (K), (B), and (D) while staying within the allocated time limit.
- **10:00pm on Friday, December 6, 2024:** the final draft of the research paper is due via the course’s [A2L](#) site for those interested in making revisions to their earlier submitted first draft, as per the formative feedback received.

VII. Tentative Course Schedule (subject to change)

Week	Dates	Topic	Assignments
1	Sep 10, 2024	Course Introduction	
2	Sep 17, 2024	History of Grace: Scripture and Biblical Theology, Part 1	
3	Sep 24, 2024	History of Grace: Scripture and Biblical Theology, Part 2	
4	Oct 1, 2024	History of Grace: Ancient and Medieval Theology, Part 1	
5	Oct 8, 2024	History of Grace: Ancient and Medieval Theology, Part 2	DUE 10/11: - Atonement Paper (Draft)
6	Oct 15, 2024	No Class - but students are expected to submit their research paper proposal by 10pm on 10/18.	[Reading Week (10/14-18)] DUE 10/18: - Research Paper (Proposal)
7	Oct 22, 2024	History of Grace: Protestant Theology, Part 1	
8	Oct 29, 2024	History of Grace: Protestant Theology, Part 2	
9	Nov 5, 2024	Contemporary Western Theology: Discussion of Eilers/Strobel	DUE 11/8: - Atonement Paper (Final)
10	Nov 12, 2024	Majority World Theology: Discussion of Green/Pardue/Yeo	
11	Nov 19, 2024	No Class - but students are expected to submit a full first draft of their research paper by 10pm on 11/22; submission of a Reading Journal first draft is optional.	[ETS/SBL (Nov 20-26)] DUE 11/22: - Reading Journal (Draft) - Research Paper (Draft)
12	Nov 26, 2024	Student Paper Presentations	
13	Dec 3, 2024	Student Paper Presentations	DUE 12/6: - Reading Journal (Final) - Research Paper (Final)
14	Dec 10, 2024	Student Paper Presentations and Course Conclusion	

VIII. Course Policies.

It is the responsibility of the student to consult the student handbook(s)/catalogue for additional institutional policies.

Submission of Assignments – Unless otherwise indicated, all assignments are to be submitted via the [A2L](#) platform in MS Word (.docx) format so that I am more easily able to provide comments and feedback. Assignments submitted in PDF format may receive less comment and feedback.

Late Assignments – “Late” is defined as any time after the above stated deadlines (e.g., if the stated deadline is 10:00pm, 10:01pm on the same day counts as “one day late”; 10:01pm on the next day counts as “two days late,” etc.). Assignments will be penalized 5 points per day late.

Style – All stylistic considerations (including but not limited to questions of formatting, footnotes, and bibliographic references) must conform to the McMaster Divinity College Style Guidelines for Essays and Theses, <https://mcmasterdivinity.ca/resources-forms/mdc-style-guide/>. Failure to observe appropriate form will result in points/grade reductions.

Illness Policy – If you need to miss any part of the course due to illness, please contact me as soon as possible so as to ensure that you do not get behind with regard to the course content (and, where applicable, especially when assignments are due).

Academic Honesty – Academic dishonesty is not qualitatively different from other types of dishonesty. It consists of misrepresenting the ownership of written work by deception or by other fraudulent means. In an academic setting this may include any number of forms such as: copying or using unauthorized aids in tests, examinations; plagiarism, i.e., submitting work that is not one’s own (regardless of the means of its production, including AI) but passing it off as if it is; submitting work for credit in a course for which credit is being or has already been given, unless the previously submitted work was presented as such to the instructor of the second course and has been deemed acceptable for credit by the instructor of that course; aiding and abetting another student’s dishonesty; giving false information for the purposes of gaining admission or credit; giving false information for the purposes of obtaining deferred examinations or extension of deadlines; forging or falsifying McMaster University or McMaster Divinity College documents.

A special note about AI: You are expected to do your own thinking and to write your own papers, etc., and not to have AI do this work for you. There may be value in using an AI tool to help you locate and collate resources or to help you “tidy up” your English grammar, usage, and mechanics, especially if English is not your native language. However, using AI to create content for you and then submitting that content *as if you created it* is considered plagiarism (i.e., submitting work that is not one’s own as if it is one’s own) and is a violation of the academic honesty policy.

AODA – In accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), the content of this course is intended to be accessible to all students who are enrolled in the course, including those with disabilities. If a student requires accommodation to participate fully in this course, that student is to contact SAS at McMaster University, who will then work directly with the McMaster Divinity College Registrar to negotiate reasonably appropriate accommodation for the student. The MDC Registrar will communicate with faculty regarding necessary

accommodations. Please note that an accommodation is not retroactive and must be requested in advance to allow sufficient time for implementation.

Gender Inclusive Language – McMaster Divinity College uses inclusive language for human beings in worship services, student written materials, and all its publications. It is expected that inclusive language will be used in chapel services and all MDC assignments. In reference to biblical texts, the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God should be respected, but you will need to use gender-inclusive language for humans, and you will need to quote from a gender-inclusive version such as, for example, the following: NRSVue (2022), TEV/GNB/GNT (1976), CEV (1995), NLT (1996), NIV (2011), and the CEB (2011).

Disclaimer – © 2024–2025 by Clement Yung Wen and MDC. This syllabus is the property of the instructor and MDC. It is prepared with currently available information. The instructor reserves the right to make changes and revisions up to and including the first day of class. Students will be kept apprised of any changes.