

**The Doctrine of the Trinity**  
**PhD - CHTH G105-C05**  
**MA - TH 6ZR6**

McMaster Divinity College  
Fall 2017  
Wed 10:30–12:20

Steven M. Studebaker, M.A., Ph.D.  
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Hours: M Noon-2:00pm; T 1:00-3:00pm and by  
appointment  
Office: 216

**I. Course Description:**

This course is an in-depth study of the doctrine of the Trinity. It considers issues related to theological method and the Trinity as well as the historical development of the doctrine through an examination of central figures, events, and periods. The course also has a seminar format, which includes a high level of student participation through the presentation of student research and discussions.

**II. Course Objectives:**

*Knowing*

- Learn the primary figures in the history of trinitarian theology
- Learn the key historical moments in the history of trinitarian theology
- Learn the key terms and concepts of trinitarian theology
- Learn the key figures and movements in contemporary trinitarian theology
- Learn key contributions to the Trinity from non-Western figures

*Being*

- Develop a sense for the significance of the Trinity for Christian formation
- Appreciate the value of diverse trinitarian traditions, especially the contributions from non-Western sources

*Doing*

- Engage in scholarly and professional interaction with colleagues
- Read and intelligently discuss assigned readings
- Present a scholarly analysis of a primary text related to the Trinity
- Write and present a scholarly book review on a significant secondary source treating the Trinity
- Write and present a scholarly research-thesis paper on a topic related to the Trinity
- Respond to and facilitate a scholarly and collegial in-class discussion on a thesis paper

**III. Course Texts:**

A. Required:

1. Steven M. Studebaker, *From Pentecost to the Triune God: A Pentecostal Trinitarian Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012).
2. Each student should acquire and read a basic introductory text. Examples are:
  - Anne Hunt, *Trinity: Nexus of the Mysteries of Christian Faith*, Theology in Global Perspectives Series, ed. Peter C. Phan (Maryknoll: Orbis, 2005).
  - Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *The Trinity: Global Perspectives* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2007).

B. Reserve Readings:

- This is a preliminary list; specifications will be given in class.

Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* (England: Blackfriars, 1964).

Augustine, *The Works of Saint Augustine: A Translation for the 21st Century*, ed. John E. Rotelle, vol. 5, *The Trinity*, ed. Edmund Hill (Brooklyn, N.Y.: New City Press, 1991).

Karl Rahner, *The Trinity*, trans. Joseph Donceel; intro. Catherine Mowry LaCugna (New York: Crossroad, 1998).

*Richard de Saint-Victor: La Trinité*, intro. and trans. Gaston Salet, *Sources Chrétiennes*, 63, ed. H. de Lubac and J. Daniélou (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1959). An English translation is available.

Friedrich Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith*, trans. and ed. H. R. Mackintosh and J. S. Stewart (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1928), 738–51 “Conclusion: The Divine Trinity.”

**IV. Course Performance Criteria:**

Assignment	Percent	Due Date
A. Primary Text Analysis and Presentation	15%	Day of presentation
B. Book Review and Presentation	15%	Day of presentation
C. Response and Facilitation	10%	Day of presentation
D. Thesis Paper and Presentation	60%	One week after presentation
1. Presentation (20%)		
2. Paper (40%)		
E. Participation:	X	Wed 10:30–12:20

Total: 100%

## V. Assignment Descriptions:

### A. Primary Text Analysis and Presentation:

1. Purpose: Sharpen your skills in the close reading and interpretation of primary texts.
2. Select a significant primary text (several shorter selections are also acceptable).
3. Present an analysis of and lead a discussion on the text(s) for the class. The presentation identifies the thesis, logic, arguments, key Scriptures, philosophical assumptions, etc. and discusses significant secondary scholarship on the piece. Discussion questions should guide the interaction on the text through the above elements.

A sample outline is:

- a. Theological and historical context of and influences on the writing
  - b. Thesis
  - c. Outline of the content
  - d. Critical analysis—does the content support the thesis, is the content consistent, advance a new perspective, etc.?
  - e. Statement of the text's contribution to the doctrine of the Trinity and your research
4. Guidelines:
    - a. Class presentation and discussion: 15–20 minutes.
    - b. Handouts are usually helpful.
    - c. Written submission: 2–3 page outline that includes:
      - Brief summary of the content and analysis of the text
      - Bibliography with critical edition(s), scholarly translations (where appropriate), and key secondary literature on the writing(s) and figure.
  5. Possible sources:
    - Augustine, *The Trinity* books 4, 5, and 15
    - Gregory of Nyssa, *On "Not Three Gods," On the Holy Spirit* (Good background reading: Lewis Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy* and *Augustine and the Trinity*)
    - Richard of St. Victor, *The Trinity*, book three
    - Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* 1a.27-30, 34-38, and 43

B. Book Review:

1. Purpose: develop the ability to comprehend and analyze secondary scholarship in a field of study.
2. Description:
  - a. Write and present in class a review of a book on a topic related to the course.
  - b. You are encouraged to write the review on a book that you will use in the thesis paper.
3. Format:
  - a. Length: 750–800 words. Double-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font.
  - b. A review should include the following elements:
    - 1) Contextualization: first book of its kind, a new study on Paul's theology of Trinity, reflects a tradition or school of thought, etc.?
    - 2) Statement of the thesis.
    - 3) Description of the content and its relationship to the thesis; does it support the thesis?
    - 4) Critical analysis: fairly point out the strengths and weaknesses.
    - 5) Statement of the book's value and suitable audience(s).
    - 6) Although not included in a review for publication, please include a statement expressing the book's usefulness for your area of research (if used for the paper).
4. Presentation:
  - a. Provide . . .
    - 1) A summary of the book's thesis and argument
    - 2) A summary of your assessment of the above
    - 3) A statement about the role it plays in your research.
  - b. Invite and lead discussion of the review
  - c. Time: 20–30 minutes.

5. Possible sources:
  - Friedrich Schleiermacher
  - Karl Barth
  - Karl Rahner
  - John Zizioulas (Eastern Orthodox)
  - Catherine Mowry LaCugna
  - Jürgen Moltmann
  - Wolfhart Pannenberg
  - David Coffey
  - Also see Kärkkäinen, *The Trinity: Global Perspectives* for figures in contemporary trinitarian theology

C. Facilitation of Presentation and Discussion:

1. Purpose: Provide professional experience moderating academic presentations and discussions.
2. Description: Each student *prepares a critique* and *facilitates a discussion* of a thesis paper presentation.
3. The critique:
  - a. Remember to be charitable; it is not only Christian, but since academia is a small guild, it is also self-preservation.
  - b. Critical (includes highlighting and discussing problems *and* strengths):  
The critique should explore the following sorts of issues:
    - Does the paper have a thesis?
    - Does the content develop and support the thesis?
    - Does it use appropriate primary sources?
    - Does it interact with the relevant secondary literature?
  - c. Time and discussion management:
    - You should keep the presentation to time limit and effectively manage student discussion (do not let one person dominate the interaction; move on to a new issue if discussion begins to go off on tangents and chase rabbit trails).
    - Endeavor to elicit comments from all people present.

4. Guidelines:

- a. The paper presentation is 15 minutes. The facilitation is 10 minutes. Together, the paper and facilitation take twenty-five minutes of a course session.
- b. The presentation and discussion typically includes the following items:
  - 1) Presenter briefly summarizes paper's thesis and argument and offers any retractions, developments, and corrections.
  - 2) Facilitators response:  
You can go through point by point as a monologue or start by raising and offering your thoughts on the paper's primary contributions and arguments and invite discussion based on your remarks and interaction with the presenter and then so forth through the rest of the points you have identified.
- c. A written submission is not required, but is encouraged as it may be beneficial to other students in the course.

D. Thesis Paper and Presentation (final paper due one week after class presentation):

1. Purpose: Provide experience writing academic conference and journal article length theological papers and gain professional experience presenting academic papers similar to that performed at academic conferences.
2. Description: Each student writes and presents a thesis paper on a topic related to the topic of the course. I encourage you to investigate the issue from the perspective of your discipline and area(s) of research interest—e.g., the Trinity and Ecclesiology and the Trinity in the Synoptics.
3. Students are encouraged to use the class as an opportunity to work on papers they can present at academic societies and/or submit for publication to academic journals.
4. Guidelines:
  - Provide a copy of the paper (rough, but not incoherent draft) to students and professor *one week before presentation*.
  - Submit final copy of the paper *one week after class presentation*
  - Length: 15–20 pages or 6,000–7,000 words.
  - Style: conform to MDC Style Guide found on the website (please use footnotes and include a bibliography of sources cited in the paper).

**VI. Lecture Outline (*tentative*):**

<b>Week</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Lecture Topics &amp; Discussions</b>	<b>Primary Text and Book Review Presentations</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>9/13</b>	<p>Introduction to the Course</p> <p><b>I. The Trinity &amp; Theological Method</b></p> <p>Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coffey, <i>Deus Trinitas</i>, 9-45 (if available)</li> <li>• Stuebaker, chapter 1</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Select a text for the primary text and book review</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<b>9/20</b>	<p>Cont. Trinity &amp; Theological Method</p> <p><b>II. Biblical Trinitarian Theology</b></p> <p>Reading: Stuebaker, chapter 2</p>	
<b>3</b>	<b>9/27</b>	<b>Cont. Biblical Trinitarian Theology</b>	
<b>4</b>	<b>10/4</b>	<p><b>III. Historical &amp; Contemporary Trinitarian Theology</b></p> <p>A. Eastern and Western</p> <p>Reading: Stuebaker, chapter 3</p>	<p><b>Primary Texts (15-20 min)</b></p> <p>1. Primary text:</p> <p>2. Primary text:</p>
<b>5</b>	<b>10/11</b>	<b><i>Reading Week</i></b>	
<b>6</b>	<b>10/18</b>	<p>B. Evangelical &amp; Reformed</p> <p>Reading: Stuebaker, chapter 4</p>	<p>4. Primary text:</p> <p>3. Primary text:</p>
<b>7</b>	<b>10/25</b>	<p>C. Pentecostal Trinitarian Theology</p> <p>Reading: Stuebaker, chapter 5</p>	

8	11/1	C. Pentecostal . . . cont.	<b>Book Reviews (15-20 min)</b> 1. Review: 2. Review:															
9	11/8	<b>D. The Trinity &amp; Religious Pluralism</b> Reading: Studebaker, chapter 6	3. Review: 4. Review:															
10	11/15	• Studebaker @ ETS																
11	11/22	<b>E. The Trinity and Creation</b> Reading: Studebaker, chapter 7																
12	11/29	<b>Student Papers</b> <table border="1" data-bbox="391 1010 1133 1150"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Paper</th> <th></th> <th>Facilitator</th> <th></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>Name</td> <td></td> <td>Name</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>Name</td> <td></td> <td>Name</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Paper		Facilitator		1	Name		Name		2	Name		Name		
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14	12/13	Conclusion Student evaluations																

**VII. Policies:**

A. Textbook Purchase:

All required textbooks for this class are available from the College's book, Room 145, McMaster Divinity College. Texts may be purchased on the first day of class. For advance purchase, you may contact READ On Bookstores, 304 The East Mall, Suite 100, Etobicoke, ON



M9C 5K1: phone 416-620-2934; fax 416-622-2308; e-mail [books@readon.ca](mailto:books@readon.ca). Other book services may also carry the texts.

**B. Academic Honesty:**

Academic dishonesty is a serious offence that may take any number of forms, including plagiarism, the submission of work that is not one's own or for which previous credit has been obtained, and/or unauthorized collaboration with other students. Academic dishonesty can result in severe consequences, e.g., failure of the assignment, failure of the course, a notation on one's academic transcript, and/or suspension or expulsion from the College.

Students are responsible for understanding what constitutes academic dishonesty. Please refer to the Divinity College Statement on Academic Honesty ~ <http://www.mcmasterdivinity.ca/programs/rules-regulations>

**C. Gender Inclusive Language:**

McMaster Divinity College uses inclusive language for human beings in worship services, student written materials, and all of its publications. In reference to biblical texts, the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God should be respected. The NRSV and TNIV are examples of the use of inclusive language for human beings. It is expected that inclusive language will be used in chapel services and all MDC assignments.

**D. 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

<http://www.mcmasterdivinity.ca/sites/default/files/documents/mdcstyleguide.pdf>

Failure to observe appropriate form will result in grade reductions.

**VIII. Late-Assignment and Exam Policy:**

- A. Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the date specified in the syllabus.
- B. Students take exams on the date and at the time scheduled in the syllabus.
- C. Late assignments are reduced five percentage points for each day late (e.g., if the grade is 90 and it is one day late [after the beginning of class equals one day late], the grade will be reduced to 85).
- D. Assignments and exams will be accepted without penalty after the specified date in the syllabus **only** in the case of an excused absence. If a student misses an exam or assignment submission due to a reason that he/she believes is excusable, then he/she must notify the instructor and schedule an exam date and/or late-assignment submission date within twenty-four hours of the beginning of the missed class session.

- E. Assignments and exams will not be accepted late on the basis of the student's involvement with school-approved activities. If you are not able to be in class for an exam or assignment submission, then you must pre-arrange with the instructor to take the exam and/or submit the assignment before the scheduled date in the syllabus.

**Please Note:** This syllabus is the property of the instructor and 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.

## IX. Bibliography:

The bibliography is not exhaustive, but should provide an entry point for literature on the doctrine of the Trinity.

### Select primary sources:

Aquinas, Thomas. *Summa Theologiae*. England: Blackfriars, 1964.

Augustine, Aurelius. *De Trinitate Libri XV (Libri XIII-XV)*, ed. W. J. Mountain and Rev. Glorie. Corpus Christianorum Series Latina 50A. Turnholti: Typographi Brepols Editores Pontificii, 1968.

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*Richard de Saint-Victor: La Trinité.* Intro. and trans. Gaston Salet. *Sources Chrétiennes*, 63, ed. H. de Lubac and J. Daniélou. Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1959.

*Saint Ambrose: Theological and Dogmatic Works.* Trans. Roy J. Deferrari. Vol. 44, *The Fathers of the Church: A New Translation.* Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1963.

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### Secondary Sources:

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Babcock, William S. "A Changing of the Christian God: The Doctrine of the Trinity in the Seventeenth Century." *Interpretation* 45 (1991): 133-146.

Badcock, Gary D. *Light of Truth and Fire of Love: A Theology of the Holy Spirit.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997.

Barnes, Michel René. "Augustine in Contemporary Trinitarian Theology." *Theological Studies* 56 (1995): 237-250.

\_\_\_\_\_. "De Régnon Reconsidered." *Augustinian Studies* 26 (1995): 51-79.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Divine Unity and the Divided Self: Gregory of Nyssa's Trinitarian Theology in its Psychological Context." *Modern Theology* 18 (2002): 475-496.

\_\_\_\_\_. "One Nature, One Power: Consensus Doctrine in Pro-Nicene Polemic." In *Studia Patristica*, vol. 29, ed. Elizabeth A. Livingstone, 205-223. Leuven: Peeters, 1997.

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- Gunton, Colin. "Augustine, the Trinity, and the Theological Crisis in the West." *Scottish Journal of Theology* 43 (1990): 33-58.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Being and Person: T. F. Torrance's Doctrine of God." In *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology: Theologians in Dialogue with T. F. Torrance*, ed. Elmer M. Colyer, 115-137. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2001.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*. 2nd ed. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1997.
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- Lossky, Vladimir. *Essai sur la théologie mystique de l'Eglise d'Orient*. Paris: 1944.
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- Luibhéid, Colm. *Eusebius of Caesarea and the Arian Crisis*. Ireland: Officina Typographica, Irish Academic Press, 1981.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Council of Nicea*. Ireland: Officina Typographica, Galway University Press, 1982.
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