

Course ID:	Course Title:	Spring 2019
NT 645	The Gospel of John in Christian Theology	Prerequisite: NT or OT course
		Credits: 3

Spring one-week MODULE

Class Information		Instructor Information		Important Dates	
Days:	Monday to Friday	Instructor:	John Behr, Ph.D.	First day of classes:	June 3
Time:	9:00 to 4:00	Email:	frjbehr@gmail.com	Last day to add/drop, or change to audit:	End of the first day
Room:	A2131	Phone:		Last day to request revised exam:	n/a
Lab/ Tutorial:	none	Office:		Last day to withdraw from course:	1 PM on the 4 th day
		Office Hours:		Last day to apply for coursework extension:	One month before final due date
Final Exam:				Last day of classes:	June 7

Course Description:

An examination of the initial reception of the Gospel of John and the memories of the author by ‘the School of John’ (J.B. Lightfoot) during the second century, bringing this work into dialogue with a close reading of the gospel as a ‘Paschal’ (Easter) Gospel and the reading of French Phenomenologist Michel Henry. By bringing together these readers of the Gospel of the Theologian (as he was known in antiquity), this course will consider the nature and discourse of Christian theology.

Christian theology is inconceivable without the Gospel of John and especially its Prologue, describing the Word of God in the beginning with God and as God, and the same Word becoming flesh—Trinity and Incarnation. The object of this seminar is to bring three different kinds of readers of the Gospel of John together into discussion with the theological goal of understanding what is meant by Incarnation and how it relates to Pascha, the Passion of Christ (meaning the Crucifixion and Resurrection), how this is conceived of as revelation and how we speak of it, that is, the relationship between scriptural exegesis and theological discourse. The first group of readers are the Christian writers from the early centuries, some of whom (such as Irenaeus of Lyons) stood in direct continuity, through Polycarp of Smyrna, with John himself; in exploring these writers, we get a glimpse of the figure of John and the celebration of Pascha, which held to have started with him. The second group of readers are modern scriptural scholars, from whom we learn of the apocalyptic dimensions of John’s Gospel, and the way in which it presents the life of Christ in terms of the Temple and its feasts, with Christ’s own body, finally erected on the Cross, being the true Temple in an offering of love rather than a sacrifice for sin—an offering in which Jesus becomes the flesh he offers for consumption, the bread which descends

from heaven, so that 'incarnation' is not an event now in the past, but the embodiment of God in those who follow Christ in the present. The third reader is Michel Henry, a French Phenomenologist, whose reading of John opens up further surprising dimensions of this Gospel, which yet align with those uncovered in the first parts of this work. We will, finally, work to bring these threads together to reflect on the nature and task of Christian theology.

Expected Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, and as demonstrated by in-class discussion and written papers, the student will be able to do

- exegete the Gospel of John, with reference to both Patristic and contemporary interpretative methods;
- analyze texts from 'the School of John', give an account of early Paschal practices, and explain the importance of this for understanding the Gospel, theology, and anthropology;
- Apply insights gained from the class to contemporary theological and anthropological issues.

Textbook

Behr, John. *John the Theologian and his Paschal Gospel: A Prologue to Theology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019.

Course Schedule

Monday am: Introduction; John and historical reminiscences (*John the Theologian*, pp.43–77 [and pp.1–40])
Monday pm: The Paschal Controversy (*John the Theologian*, pp.77–98)
Tuesday am: Apocalyptic, Apocalypse and the Gospel (*John the Theologian*, pp.99–136)
Tuesday pm: The Temple of his Body (*John the Theologian*, pp.137–193)
Wed am: The Living Human Being (*John the Theologian*, pp.194–217)
Wed pm: The Son of Man (*John the Theologian*, pp.218–244)
Thursday am: The Prologue (*John the Theologian*, pp.244–270)
Thursday pm: Michel Henry's Phenomenology of Living Flesh (*John the Theologian*, pp.274–305.)
Friday am: History, Phenomenology, Theology (*John the Theologian*, pp.306–322)
Friday pm: Conclusion (*John the Theologian*, pp.322–331 [and pp.1–40])

Requirements:

The class will follow a seminar format: **reading** the assigned sections before class (and also general (re-)reading of the Gospel of John during the week) and **discussion** is essential.

Assessment will be based upon two written papers.

First: (5 pages, double-spaced) to be handed in on **Friday 7 June** (25% of grade);

Title: Is Käsemann right that for John the Passion is 'a mere postscript which had to be included because John could not ignore this tradition nor yet could he fit it organically into his work'?

Second: Research paper (25 pages, double spaced) to be emailed to me (frjbehr@gmail.com) by **Friday 1 August** (75% of grade).

Here you are free to take any topic that has particularly interested you during the course of the week (whether it be, for instance, a particular pericope in the Gospel of John, the celebration of Pascha in the second century, or a broader theological theme to which the material we have studied gives rise, for instance 'Incarnation') and research it further. Please speak with me during the week about what you might research. I will be available for further guidance thereafter by email (or Skype if it can be arranged). A formal proposal, with bibliography, is due on **Friday 21 June**.

Attendance:

As the class will proceed by way of a one-week intensive seminar, followed by an independent study research period, attendance at all sessions during the intensive seminar is mandatory.

Grade Summary:

<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Description</u>
A+	
A	Excellent
A-	
B+	
B	Good
B-	
C+	
C	Satisfactory
C-	
D+	
D	Minimal Pass
F	Failure

Please note that final grades will be available on student registration system. Printed grade sheets are not mailed out.

Further Suggested Bibliography

(For more, see the bibliography in *John the Theologian*)

Ashton, John, *Understanding the Fourth Gospel*, New Edn. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007 [1991]).

Ashton, John, *The Gospel of John and Christian Origins* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2014).

Bauckham, Richard, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses: The Gospels as Eyewitness Testimony* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2006).

Coloe, Mary L., *God Dwells with Us: Temple Symbolism in the Fourth Gospel* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2001).

Henry, Michel, *I Am the Truth: Towards a Philosophy of Christianity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003).

Hill, Charles E., *The Johannine Corpus in the Early Church* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

Ambrose University Academic Policies:

Communication

All students have received an Ambrose e-mail account upon registration. It is the student's responsibility to check this account regularly as the Ambrose email system will be the professor's instrument for notifying students of important matters (cancelled class sessions, extensions, requested appointments, etc.) between class sessions. If students do not wish to use their Ambrose accounts, they will need to forward all messages from the Ambrose account to another personal account.

Registration

During the **Registration Revision Period** students may enter a course without permission, change the designation of any class from credit to audit and /or voluntary withdraw from a course without financial or academic penalty or record. Courses should be added or dropped on the student portal by the deadline date; please consult the List of Important Dates. After that date, the original status remains and the student is responsible for related fees.

Students intending to withdraw from a course after the Registration Revision Period must apply to the Office of the Registrar by submitting a "Request to Withdraw from a Course" form or by sending an email to the Registrar's Office by the **Withdrawal Deadline**; please consult the List of Important Dates on the my.ambrose.edu website. Students will not receive a tuition refund for courses from which they withdraw after the Registration Revision period. A grade of "W" will appear on their transcript.

Students wishing to withdraw from a course, but who fail to do so by the applicable date, will receive the grade earned in accordance with the course syllabus. A student obliged to withdraw from a course after the Withdrawal Deadline because of health or other reasons may apply to the Registrar for special consideration.

Exam Scheduling

Students, who find a conflict in their exam schedule must submit a Revised Examination Request form to the Registrar's Office by the deadline date; please consult the List of Important Dates. Requests will be considered for the following reasons only: 1) the scheduled final examination slot conflicts with another exam; 2) the student has three final exams within three consecutive exam time blocks; 3) the scheduled final exam slot conflicts with an exam at another institution; 4) extenuating circumstances. Travel is not considered a valid excuse for re-scheduling or missing a final exam.

Electronic Etiquette

Students are expected to treat their instructor, guest speakers, and fellow students with respect. It is disruptive to the learning goals of a course or seminar and disrespectful to fellow students and the instructor to use electronics for purposes unrelated to the course during a class session. Turn off all cell phones and other electronic devices during class. Laptops should be used for class-related purposes only. Do not use iPods, MP3 players, or headphones. Do not text, read, or send personal emails, go on Facebook or other social networks, search the internet, or play computer games during class. Some professors will not allow the use of any electronic devices in class. The professor has the right to disallow the student to use a

laptop in future lectures and/or to ask a student to withdraw from the session if s/he does not comply with this policy. Repeat offenders will be directed to the Dean. If you are expecting communication due to an emergency, please speak with the professor before the class begins.

Academic Policies

It is the responsibility of all students to become familiar with and adhere to academic policies as stated in the Academic Calendar. Personal information (information about an individual that may be used to identify that individual) may be required as part of taking this class. Any information collected will only be used and disclosed for the purpose for which the collection was intended. For further information contact the Privacy Compliance Officer at privacy@ambrose.edu.

Extensions

Although extensions to coursework in the semester are at the discretion of the instructor, students may not turn in coursework for evaluation after the last day of the scheduled final examination period unless they have received permission for a course Extension from the Registrar's Office. Requests for course extensions or alternative examination time must be submitted to the Registrar's Office by the deadline date; please consult the List of Important Dates. Course extensions are only granted for serious issues that arise "due to circumstances beyond the student's control."

Appeal of Grade

An appeal for change of grade on any course work must be made to the course instructor within one week of receiving notification of the grade. An appeal for change of final grade must be submitted to the Registrar's Office in writing and providing the basis for appeal within 30 days of receiving notification of the final grade, providing the basis for appeal. A review fee of \$50.00 must accompany the appeal. If the appeal is sustained, the fee will be refunded.

Academic Integrity

We are committed to fostering personal integrity and will not overlook breaches of integrity such as plagiarism and cheating. Academic dishonesty is taken seriously at Ambrose University as it undermines our academic standards and affects the integrity of each member of our learning community. Any attempt to obtain credit for academic work through fraudulent, deceptive, or dishonest means is academic dishonesty. Plagiarism involves presenting someone else's ideas, words, or work as one's own. Plagiarism is fraud and theft, but plagiarism can also occur by accident when a student fails or forgets to acknowledge to another person's ideas or words. Plagiarism and cheating can result in a failing grade for an assignment, for the course, or immediate dismissal from the university. Students are expected to be familiar with the policies in the current Academic Calendar that deal with plagiarism, cheating, and the penalties and procedures for dealing with these matters. All cases of academic dishonesty are reported to the Academic Dean and become part of the student's permanent record.

Note: Students are strongly advised to retain this syllabus for their records.