

Assessment 1
Theological Essay

Due Date: 13 March

Select one of the following topics for an essay of 4500 words. Corresponding with each topic, I have given some suggested readings. Please note that, in some instances, I have listed whole volumes. Naturally, you will not necessarily need to read the whole volume, but in these cases the relevant material may be distributed throughout the book, and I trust that you will be able to gather the information as necessary.

1. Any religion will have an account of how the principles of its faith are knowable. Christianity typically has negotiated this question by distinguishing between those aspects of its religion which are discoverable to reason and those which can be received only by faith in divine revelation. Discuss the relationship between faith and reason in Christian theology and its pertinence for inter-religious dialogue.

- John Paul II, "Fides et Ratio", Encyclical Letters, available online. http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_14091998_fides-et-ratio.html

- Paul Griffiths, *Reason and the Reasons of Faith* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2005).

- Robert Sokolowski, *The God of Faith and Reason* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1995).

2. We discussed the fact that the Abrahamic religions share some common commitments on the nature of the doctrine of creation. How might these commitments about creation provide the basis for fruitful inter-faith discourse? And what are its limitations for inter-faith discourse?

- Thomas Aquinas, "Creation", *Summa Contra Gentiles*, available online. <http://dhspriority.org/thomas/ContraGentiles2.htm>

- Karl Barth, "God as Creator", *Dogmatics in Outline* (London: SCM, 1999), pp. 41-49.

- Herman Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics*, vol. 2, *God and Creation* (Grand Rapids:

Baker Academic, 2004).

3. The doctrine of the Trinity is foundational to the Christian understanding of God and God's works in the world. How does Christian belief in the Trinity shape a distinctly Christian understanding of the Old Testament?

- John Calvin, "The Similarity of the Old and New Testaments" and "The Difference Between the Two Testaments" in *The Institutes of Christian Religion*, 2 vols., ed. John T. McNeill (Louisville: WJKP, 2006), II.x-xi.

- Robert Jenson, "A Second Thought about Inspiration", *Pro Ecclesia* 13/4, pp. 393-398.