

GRADUATE COURSE DESCRIPTION

Term: **Spring 2009**
Instructor: Dr. D. Lyle Dabney
Course #: THEO 301
Course Title: Christian Anthropology

Content:

This graduate course in systematic theology will examine the question of the human in biblical, historical, and contemporary theological discourse. In recent years much has been made of the fact that we live in a time of change, a moment in which one millennium has ended and another begun; but the real change we are experiencing in America today is much more about culture than chronology, much less about the hour we live in than the vision of human life we live out. The western tradition has defined human life in terms of what might be called two 'final quests.' The first was the 'metaphysical quest' that was central to the classical tradition as well as the cultural project of Christendom, and that answered the question of the human ontologically. The second was the 'historical quest' of the Modern cultural project in which the self was defined in reference to epistemology. Each of these final quests—along with their attendant definitions of the means and meaning of human being and becoming—is now in crisis. The result is that Christianity now finds itself in a social world that no longer has a common account of the human good, and is too often uncertain as to what it believes itself. In the midst of that crisis, Christian theology is turning to the human question anew. This course will investigate the biblical witness, the history of the philosophical and theological traditions, and the contemporary discussion of the self. The student will be graded according to class participation and the completion of a set of relatively short research projects that take up historical, exegetical, and contemporary aspects of this question.

Required Texts:

- At this time, I do not foresee that any books will be required in this course. Instead, readings from the philosophical and theological traditions will be available in the Memorial Library reserves.