

CH 2H03/6H06 WAR AND PEACE IN CHRISTIAN HISTORY

McMaster Divinity College

Fall Semester, 2009

Thursday

8:30 – 10:20am

Instructor: Dr. Gordon L. Heath

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course will examine Christian thinking and practice on militarism, the restraint of war and paths to peace, including just war, non-violence, pacifism and revolution. Special attention will be given to understanding Christian thinking and practice in historical context.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Knowing

- to provide students with an understanding of how the church's view of a Christian's participation in warfare has developed and differed over the centuries
- to examine various ways in which the church has attempted to live in and engage with the wider culture during specific military conflicts
- to help students understand the process of theological development

Being

- to encourage students to reflect on their own view of Christians and war

Doing

- to develop in each student an ability to assess documents and situations from an historical perspective

REQUIRED TEXTS:

- Roland Bainton. *Christian Attitudes to War and Peace: A Historical Survey and Critical Re-evaluation*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1988 (paperback edition).
- Lisa Sowle Cahill. *Love Your Enemies: Discipleship, Pacifism, and Just War Theory*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994.
- Thomas F. Madden. *The New Concise History of the Crusades*. Lanham/Boulder/New York/Toronto/Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2006. (updated student edition)
- Gordon L. Heath. *A War with a Silver Lining: Canadian Protestant Churches and the South African War, 1899-1902*. Montreal/Kingston/London/Ithaca: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2009.
- Gordon L. Heath. *Doing Church History: A User-friendly Introduction to Researching the History of Christianity*. Toronto: Clements Publishing, 2008.

All required textbooks for this class are available from the College's book service, READ On Bookstore, Room 218, 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 M9B 6E2: phone 416-620-2934; fax 416-622-2308; e-mail books@readon.ca. Other book services may also carry the texts.

METHOD:

Instructor's Presentations:

Most classes will have a presentation by the professor. This presentation will seek to build upon and further develop the assigned readings. An important part of these presentations will be a discussion of primary source readings distributed by the professor.

Readings:

All readings are to be completed before the class begins. These readings will not only be a critical component to understanding the lectures, but also will be an important part of the class discussions.

Assignments:

- **Research Paper:** This ten page typed, double-spaced, 12 point font, 1¼ inch margins, and Chicago-style endnotes research paper is on a Christian response to a particular war. This paper requires a thesis to be defended, and should be based on primary and secondary sources. Each student will also provide to the class a brief summary of the paper (in the final few weeks of the class – the amount of time for each presentation and question period will depend on the number of students in the class). See *Doing Church History* for more details on writing a history research paper with a thesis. **Due 19 November.**
- **Book Review:** This two-page typed, double-spaced, 12 point font, 1¼ inch margins, and Chicago-style endnotes review of *The New Concise History of the Crusades*. See *Doing Church History* for more information on how to write a review. **Due 8 October.**
- **Personal Reflection:** This two-page typed, double-spaced, 12 point font, 1¼ inch margins, and Chicago-style endnotes personal reflection should be a brief summary of the student's personal opinion about whether or not Christian's should ever be involved in warfare. Mention of why such an opinion is held is also expected. **Due 17 September.**
- **Movie Review/Discussion:** The class will watch the movie *The Mission*, and then discuss it. The discussion will focus on the question: whose response to the advance of Portuguese at the end of the movie was the right one? **Date TBD.**
- **Primary Source Assignment:** Most classes will have a primary source reading that should be read by all students before the class begins. There will be a brief time in the class to discuss the reading, and this time will be led by a student (or a group – depending on class size). See *Doing Church History* for more details on questions and issues related to primary sources. Students not leading are expected to take an active and thoughtful part in the discussion.

Advanced degree students are expected to fulfill all assignments at an advanced degree level. They will also be required to prepare an annotated bibliography of ten books and ten articles in the area of their research paper, as well as write an additional 7500 words for the research paper.

GRADING:

- Research Paper 40%
- Book Review 25%
- Personal Reflection 10%
- Primary Source Assignment 15%
- Movie Reflection/Discussion 5%
- Participation 5%

GENERAL COMMENTS:

- 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 ~ www.madciv.ca/regs/honesty.php.
- 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.
- Essays must be handed in at the beginning of the class on the day they are due. All other essays will be considered to be late. Students may be exempted from the late penalty of 3% per day (not including weekends) if they attach to their essay a letter explaining the genuine emergency that delayed them. Late assignments (even ones with an extension) will not receive comments and constructive criticism from the professor.
- The essay should be handed directly to the instructor. To avoid any potential problems, students are advised to keep their working notes and a copy of their paper until a final mark has been received.
- Please turn off your cell phone and/or pager before the class begins.
- Please do not attend class if you are ill and contagious (e.g. the flu).

CLASS SCHEDULE:

Sept 10 **Introduction to the Class**

Sept 17 **Early Church Attitudes to War**

Readings: B. 1-5; C. 1-3

Personal Reflection Due

Sept 24 **The Development of the Just War: Constantine, Augustine, and Ambrose**

Readings: B. 6; C. 4

Oct 1 **The Barbarianization of the Church?**

Readings:

Oct 8 **The Crusades**

Readings: B. 7; C. 5,7

Book Review

Oct 15 **The Dark Side of the Reformation**

Readings: B. 8-9; C. 6,8

Oct 22 **Spreading Civilization and Christianity: Imperialism and the Church**

Readings: B. 10; H. entire book

Oct 29 **Great Hopes: Nineteenth Century Peace Movements**

Readings: B. 11-12

Nov 5 **The Church and the World Wars**

Readings: B. 13

Nov 12 **Church and War in a Nuclear Age**

Readings: B. 14-15; C. 9-11

Nov 19 **Post-Christendom Developments**

Readings: articles – handed out in class

Research Paper Due

Nov 26 **Research Papers**

Dec 3 **Research Papers**

Dec 10 **Exam Week (optional – may be used for research paper presentations - TBD)**

This syllabus is for information only and remains the property of the professor. This syllabus is prepared with the best information available, but the professor reserves the right to change the content and format of the course.