

The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary  
Louisville, KY 40280

# **DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY SEMINAR: 84920 THEOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY**

## **VALUING THE BODY FROM CONCEPTION THROUGH ETERNITY**

Gregg R. Allison, instructor

### **SYLLABUS**

#### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

A study of classical and contemporary understandings of humankind is undertaken. Various issues will be explored, such as the creation, nature, constitution, development, inner life, physical body, sexuality, male and female identities and roles, and personhood of human beings.

With regard to this specific course: An exploration of the teaching of Scripture concerning life in the human body with the goal of developing a systematic and practical theology of physical existence from conception through eternity. Topics to be covered include the creation of the body (both in a global and personal sense), the development of the body, a survey of attitudes toward the body throughout history, the soul-body (or mind-body) problem, the “gendered” body, the sexual body, the disciplined body, the body and the worship of God, clothing the body, the sanctification of the body, the suffering and healing of the body, the death of the body, the eschatological body (the body in the intermediate state, the resurrection of the body, the body in the Millennium, and the body in the new heavens and earth), and current issues regarding the body (cloning, abortion, euthanasia, etc.). This course will also consider insights into the body’s functioning and development from the disciplines of nutrition, exercise physiology, and psychology.

## **COURSE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

1. To identify and interpret key passages articulating the Scriptural teaching on the human body and to incorporate this multi-faceted instruction into a systematic and practical theology of physical existence.
2. To consider what other disciplines (nutrition, exercise physiology, psychology) have to say about the human body and to appropriate those insights that integrate appropriately with the Scriptural teaching into an overall theology of physical existence.
3. To begin to grasp some of the many perspectives on the human body which have been expressed throughout history and (some of) which continue to our current time, so as to: a) recognize what factors have influenced our thinking about the body, b) sort out Scriptural perspectives on the body from other perspectives, and c) allow the Scriptural teaching on physical existence to remake our perspective on, and dominate our treatment of, our body.
4. To overcome any negative perspectives and feelings about the human body as somehow being inherently evil or the ultimate source of sin, and as being a hindrance to spiritual and moral development or outside of God's redemptive purpose and work.
5. To learn to value deeply:
  - the miracle of physical life;
  - the gender that God has created us;
  - those of the other, complementary gender;
  - our human sexuality;
  - physical discipline;
  - divine action in and through our body;
  - our aging and bodily suffering, along with divine grace in healing;
  - our body.
6. To design a personal program of proper eating, drinking, resting, sleeping, and exercising that is appropriate for the students in their particular current state in life and that is in accordance with God's call on their life.
7. To contemplate the death of our body and consider the future of our body in various eschatological states.
8. To develop a biblically-based model of life in the human body from our systematic and practical theology of physical existence, and to apply this model to current issues regarding the body such as cloning, abortion, euthanasia, etc.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Regular **attendance** at, and **participation**, in class lectures and discussions. Students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the topic(s) for the day.
2. Thorough **reading** of all assigned articles, books, handouts, etc., and **exegesis** of the assigned biblical texts. Please keep a log of your reading, listing the assignment, the due date, the date of completion, and the percentage of credit received. Reading assignments completed late will be lowered 15% for each class day they are completed after the assigned date.

There is no need to write out your exegesis of the passages, and no exegetical assignments will be collected and graded. But you should make exegetical notes and come to class prepared to discuss the passages assigned. I may ask students to rotate leading the exegetical discussion. (I will assign this ahead of time so you can be thoroughly prepared.) So for each passage, read it several times and work through the passage using your exegetical skills, engaging in careful and thorough interpretation. Then consult the best commentaries to help you work through any difficult issues. What you should have is a solid, defensible interpretation of the passage. In class, we will then work through the implications of the passage for our developing theology of the body.

3. **Research paper.** You will select a topic on the theology of the body and research and write an academic paper (20 pages, double-spaced, endnotes). Please get my approval for your topic before you begin to research and write. Any of the topics outlined in the “Course Assignments” section (below) are excellent, but you are certainly not limited to those. A historical study of a particular “body” tradition may be done, interaction with a current issue regarding the body may be undertaken, exegesis of a particularly important Scriptural passage may be carried out, etc. Guidelines: *Southern Seminary Manual of Style*.

4. **Application paper.** In lieu of a final exam you will be asked to interact with three of the topics covered in this class and articulate your application of them to your own body. One of the three must be designing a personal program of proper eating, drinking, resting, sleeping, and exercising that is appropriate for you in your particular current state in life and that is in accordance with God’s call on your life. This paper should be about ten pages in length (double-spaced), but the amount of pages is not the issue; rather, the practical interaction with three topics and application of them to your own body is key.

## **COURSE POLICIES**

### Course Grading:

Reading and participation	50%
Research paper	35%
Application paper	15%

### Late Assignments:

Assignments (research paper, application paper) turned in late will be lowered 1/2 of a grade (e.g. B to B-) for each class day they are turned in after the assigned date. Reading assignments completed late will be lowered 15% for each class day they are completed after the assigned date.

**Note for Students with Disabilities:** In order to ensure full class participation, any student with a disabling condition requiring accommodations (e.g., tape recorders, special adaptive equipment, special note-taking needs) is strongly encouraged to contact the professor and the Garrett Fellow at the beginning of the course.

# COURSE OUTLINE

## I. THE CREATION OF THE BODY

### A. creation in a global sense

1. the creation of the man Adam (Genesis 2:7)
2. the creation of the woman Eve (Genesis 2:18-25)
3. creation in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-31)

### B. creation in a personal sense

1. God's "*in utero*" work (Psalm 139:13-16)
2. conception and pregnancy
3. childbirth

## II. A SHORT HISTORY OF THE BODY: Attitudes toward the body from history

### A. pre-Christian traditions

1. the Hebrew tradition
2. the Platonic tradition
3. the Aristotelian tradition
4. Epicureanism, Stoicism, and other non-biblical traditions

### B. Christian traditions

1. the early Christian tradition
2. Gnosticism, Manicheism, and other challenges to the early Christian tradition
3. monasticism and the ascetic tradition
4. the developed Catholic tradition
5. the Protestant tradition

C. scientific, modern, and postmodern traditions

1. the Newtonian mechanistic tradition (the body as machine)
2. the evolutionary tradition
3. neo-Gnostic tendencies (e.g., Heaven's Gate)
4. posthuman bodies: cyborgs and human-machines

D. the evangelical ambivalence toward the body

**III. SCRIPTURAL TEACHING, TOGETHER WITH INTERDISCIPLINARY INSIGHTS, ON ISSUES CONCERNING THE BODY**

A. the “gendered” body: humanity as male and female

male-female relationships (1 Timothy 5:1-2)

B. the sexual body: sexuality and the body

1. sexuality from biblical and physiological perspectives (general affirmations)
2. the physical and spiritual intimacy of sexuality (1 Corinthians 6:12-20)
3. the husband-wife sexual relationship (1 Cor. 7:1-7; 1 Thess. 4:3-8)
4. sexuality and celibacy (1 Corinthians 7:8-9, 25-35)
5. the perversion of sexuality (masturbation, homosexuality, pornography)

C. the disciplined body

1. physical discipline
  - a. 1 Timothy 4:1-10
  - b. Colossians 2:16-23
  - c. 1 Corinthians 9:24-27
2. exercise physiology (guest lecturer)
3. nutrition (guest lecturer)

#### D. the body and the worship of God

1. physical posture in worship
2. the sacraments/ordinances as physical means of grace

#### E. clothing the body

1. Genesis 2:25; 3:7-21 from unashamed nakedness to covering in shame
2. cross-dressing (for transvestitism; Deut. 22:5)
3. 1 Timothy 2:8-10; 1 Peter 3:1-7
4. Leviticus 19:28 (tattooing)

#### F. the sanctification of the body: 1 Thessalonians 5:23

1. glorifying God in the body
2. the sin of gluttony (also drunkenness)
3. the sin of sloth
4. physical rest: the Sabbath
5. fasting, asceticism, and denying the body

#### G. the aging, suffering, and healing of the body

1. 2 Corinthians 4:7-18
2. James 5:13-16
3. the interaction of the mind and the body (guest lecturer)

### **IV. DEATH OF THE BODY**

1. death defined (biblically, physiologically)
2. the Fall of Adam and the introduction of human death
3. Scriptural teaching on death of the body
4. how we die

## **V. THE ESCHATOLOGICAL BODY**

### A. the body in the intermediate state

1. 2 Corinthians 5:1-10
2. the state of the soul (of believers and unbelievers)

### B. the resurrection of the body

1. Philippians 3:20-21
2. 1 Corinthians 15:35-58
3. Romans 8:11

### C. the body in the Millennium

1. Revelation 20:1-6
2. hints from the Old Testament (Isaiah 11:2-9; 65:20; Zech. 14:6-21; Psalm 72:8-14)

### D. the body in the eternal state (the new heavens and new earth)

1. Romans 8:18-25
2. 2 Peter 3:8-13
3. Revelation 21-22

## **VI. CURRENT ISSUES REGARDING THE BODY** (*various junctures throughout the course*)

1. cloning
2. organ transplants
3. cremation
4. extraordinary measures to preserve life
5. abortion
6. euthanasia
7. reproductive technologies
8. genetic engineering
9. stem cell research

## **COURSE SCHEDULE (subject to revision)**

week 1 introduction

week 2 creation of the body

week 3 a short history of the body

week 4 the gendered body

week 5 the sexual body

week 6 the sexual body

week 7 the disciplined body

week 8 no class

week 9 nutrition and exercise physiology

week 10 the body and the worship of God; clothing the body

week 11 the sanctification of the body

week 12 the aging, suffering, and healing of the body

week 13 death of the body

week 14 the eschatological body

## **COURSE ASSIGNMENTS (subject to revision)**

### **week 1 introduction**

*exegesis:* none

*reading:* none

### **week 2 creation of the body**

*exegesis:* Genesis 1:26-31; 2:7, 18-25; Psalm 139:13-16

*reading:* *Toward a Theology of the Body* (all); *From Conception to Birth: A Life Unfolds* (photojournalism; all)

### **week 3 a short history of the body**

*exegesis:* none

*reading:* *Body and Soul: A Study on the Christian View of Man* (13-159); *Theologies of the Body: Humanist and Christian* (148-239); *Body, Soul and Life Everlasting* (7-32); *Soma in Biblical Theology* (117-134); *The Flesh: Instrument of Salvation* (65-94)

### **week 4 the gendered body**

*exegesis:* 1 Timothy 5:1-2

*reading:* “Can Men and Women Be Friends?” (article); *Religious Imagination and the Body: A Feminist Analysis* (19-39); “From Conduct to Character—A Guide to Sexual Adventure” (article); *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* (31-59); “Reproducing the Posthuman Body: Ectogenetic Fetus, Surrogate Mother, Pregnant Man” (article)

### **week 5 the sexual body (part 1)**

*exegesis:* 1 Corinthians 6:12-20; 7:1-7

*reading:* *The Wisdom of the Body* (154-177); *Embodiment: An Approach to Sexuality and Christian Theology* (37-103);

week 6 **the sexual body** (part 2)

*exegesis:* 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8; 1 Corinthians 7:8-9, 25-35

*reading:* “Single and Sexual: The Church’s Neglected Dilemma” (article); “Sexual Intimacy and Singleness” (article)

week 7 **the disciplined body**

*exegesis:* 1 Timothy 4:1-10; Colossians 2:16-23; 1 Corinthians 9:24-27

*reading:* *Fullness of Life: Historical Foundations for a New Asceticism* (135-163)

week 8 **no class**

week 9 **exercise physiology and nutrition**

*exegesis:* none

*reading:* “The Contribution of Exercise Physiology to a Theology of the Human Body” (in class handout); “Physical Activity and Health: A Report of the Surgeon General” (article)

*special instructions:* guest lecturers Trende Reed (nutritionist) and Rebecca Adams (exercise physiologist); wear comfortable workout clothes and shoes

week 10 **the body and the worship of God; clothing the body**

*exegesis:* worship: John 4:19-24; Romans 12:1-2; clothing: Genesis 2:25; 3:7-21; Deut. 22:5; 1 Tim. 2:8-10; 1 Peter 3:1-7; Lev. 19:28

*reading:* *Worship: Rediscovering the Missing Jewel* (119-134); “Body Language: Clothing Ourselves and Others” (article); *Forbes* (Oct. 13; 2003) article on transvestism; “Brand New Bodies” (article)

week 11 **the sanctification of the body**

*exegesis:* 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Genesis 2:2-3; Exodus 20

*reading:* *The Seven Deadly Sins: Jewish, Christian, and Classical Reflections on Human Psychology* (sloth 191-216; gluttony, 139-163); *The Seven Deadly Sins: Society and Evil* (sloth 5-52; gluttony, 212-231); “Keeping Sabbath: Reviving a

Christian Practice” (article); “Rediscovering the Sabbath” (article); *From Sabbath to Lord’s Day: A Biblical, Historical, and Theological Investigation* (344-405); *Elements of a Christian Worldview* (242-281)

week 12 **the aging, suffering, and healing of the body**

*exegesis*: 2 Corinthians 4:7-18; James 5:13-16

*reading*: Chrysostom’s *Homilies on the Statues* 11:3-5, 11 (article)

*special instructions*: guest lecturer (Dr. Ross Nunes, second half)

week 13 **death of the body**

*exegesis*: Matt. 10:28; James 2:26; Eccl. 12:7

*reading*: *How We Die: Reflections on Life’s Final Chapter* (read one chapter); “The Art of Dying Well” (article); “The Moment of Death” (article); “The Definition of Death” (article); “The Experience of Dying: A Physician’s Experience, A Pastor’s Experience” (two articles); *The Death of Ivan Ilych* (43-45); “Death and Dying” (article)

week 14 **the eschatological body**

*exegesis*: 2 Cor. 5:1-10; Phil. 3:20-21; 1 Cor. 15:35-58; Rom. 8:11; Rev. 20:1-6; Rom. 8:18-25; 2 Peter 3:8-13; Rev. 21-22

*reading*: *The Flesh: Instrument of Salvation* (21-29); *The Body: A Study in Pauline Theology* (73-83); Grudem’s *Systematic Theology* (810-825; 828-836; 1158-1165); *The Bible and the Future* (92-108)