



Imagining Salvation

HT 567 60
UDTS | Spring 2023

Dr. Mary Emily Duba
Assistant Professor of Theology

Contact:
Van Vliet 206
mduba@dbq.edu
563-589-3102
Email me to set up an appointment

The Dead Shall be Raised, Jae-Im Kim, Japan

At the center of the Christian faith is a holy mystery: because of God's saving work in Jesus Christ, *everything is different*. But what, exactly, has God done in Jesus? What earthly difference does it make? In the midst of the concrete sufferings and ambiguities of creaturely life—from personal tragedies to systemic violence and ecological collapse—what does it mean to profess a God of mending mercy who reconciles, redeems, and creates anew?

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course explores questions of soteriology—the meaning and mystery of God's saving work in Jesus Christ. Students interpret soteriological language and imagery found in Scripture, popular culture, and liturgical methods, and engage classic and contemporary theologies of salvation critically and constructively. Students come away able to *do theology* as a communal practice, to articulate what is at stake in diverse accounts of salvation, and to communicate the soteriological significance of Jesus Christ in theologically-grounded, contextually appropriate, and pastorally sensitive ways.

Three Credits. Letter grade. Prerequisites: Christian Doctrine I and by permission.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Active participation in this course will enable you:

- to identify and interpret soteriological imagery and ideas in Scripture, popular culture, liturgical materials (eg. hymns), and theological texts;
- to articulate *what is at stake* theologically and pastorally in diverse images of and ideas about sin and salvation, especially in light of the concrete sufferings and ambiguities of creaturely life;
- to evaluate the theological merit and contextual appropriateness of such images and ideas;
- to communicate the soteriological significance of Jesus Christ in theologically-grounded, contextually appropriate, and pastorally sensitive ways; and
- to *do theology* as a communal practice and an expression of faith.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

This course fulfills the following UDTS degree outcomes:

- Engage contemporary theological and ethical issues with insight and humility (MDiv);
- Articulate key theological affirmations of the church's theological tradition (MACL);
- Articulate and reflect critically and constructively on the biblical and theological foundations of God's mission to the world (MAMD).

REQUIRED TEXTS

- Robin Ryan, *Jesus and Salvation: Soundings in the Christian Tradition and Contemporary Theology* (Liturgical Press, 2015)
- Gene L. Green, K.K. Yeo, Stephen T. Pardue, eds., *So Great a Salvation: Soteriology in the Majority World* (Eerdmans, 2017).
- Nancy Pineda-Madrid, *Suffering and Salvation in Ciudad Juárez* (Augsburg, 2011).
- Elizabeth Johnson, *Creation and the Cross: The Mercy of God for a Planet in Peril* (Orbis, 2018).
- Serene Jones, *Trauma and Grace: Theology in a Ruptured World* (WJK, 2009).
- An academic study Bible. If you don't yet own an academic study Bible, I recommend *The New Oxford Annotated Bible* (2018 edition).

Additional readings and resources will be made available on Moodle.

EXPECTATIONS

1. Check in to the course multiple times per week (see "Participation" section below). In an online environment, this is what it means to "attend class."
2. Have and read all assigned materials.
3. Do your own work and cite your sources (see UDTS' academic integrity statement in the Student Handbook).
4. Meet all deadlines.
5. Prepare adequately to engage in discussions.
6. Be an active participant in learning, rather than a passive recipient of information.
7. Read and discuss the work of others (authors and your classmates) with a charitable spirit that seeks to understand.

POLICIES AND SUPPORT

Extensions. If you need to turn in an assignment late, please let me know prior to the due date. We will work out an accommodation. Late forum posts will not be accepted after the week closes (this pragmatic—the conversation is over and no one wants to go back to read them!) For larger assignments and projects, unexcused late work will lose ½ a letter grade for every day that it is late (ie. B becomes a B- if 1 day late, and a C+ if 2 days late.)

Accommodations. I am committed to creating an inclusive learning environment. If you anticipate any barriers to learning in this class related to a disability, please speak with me during the first week of class so that we can work together to design a plan for your learning and participation.

Absences. One week of absence from our online space (not opening readings or participating in forums) will receive a warning; the second week will reduce the course grade by one full letter. The third unexcused absence will result in automatic administrative withdrawal from the course.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

According to the standards of a 3-credit course, please expect to spend an average of 7.5 hours on homework and 3 hours “in-class” in opening reflections, watching lectures, and engaging in forum discussions each week.

Participation (20%)

Participation involves active engagement with course materials and our learning community, as evidenced by timely, substantive, and thoughtful contributions to discussion forums.

1. By **Thursday** of each week, **post** an “Opening Reflection” in response to a directed prompt.
2. Once you have posted your Opening Reflection, enter into Table Talk conversations with your classmates and me. Contribute to the conversation substantively *at least twice*. Interjections and exclamations like, “I agree!” or “I have a similar question” build positive energy in the class community (so feel free to encourage one another that way!) but won’t count toward your two substantive contributions to the conversation unless you expand (why? how so?)
3. Earn points for your contributions to our Table Talk! Points will be given on a scale of 1-5, where 1 represents minimal contribution or incomplete work and 5 represents substantive contributions that reflect engagement with the reading and contribute to the conversation. (15 points possible per week)

Writing Assignments (80%)

Assignments will vary in genre, audience, purpose, and weight:

1. Preliminary statement on salvation (5%)
2. Theological Glossary (10%)
3. Atonement Reference Guide (10%)
4. Assignment 1 (15%)
5. Assignment 2 (15%)
6. Final Project (20%)
7. Learning reflection (5%)

COURSE SCHEDULE

A detailed course schedule appears on our Moodle course page. Please check the site to see detailed assignments, to access supplementary readings, and to upload assignments.

Rhythm of the Week. Each new week starts **Tuesday** (though materials will be accessible on Moodle since the preceding **Friday** to give you scheduling flexibility). All readings and Opening Reflections are due by **Thursday** (10pm Central). Once you have posted your Opening Reflection, you may enter into Table Talk conversations with your classmates. You must enter the conversation several times: Opening Reflection + Table Talk discussion contributions. Table Talk wraps up by **Monday** at noon Central when I will post written or recorded wrap-up to close the week.

