**CS/TS 650 Theological Foundations of Christian Spirituality**

**Reflection Questions**

*The answers to these questions may be in journal style, using first person “I” statements. However, the writing must also be academically strong, proofed, and edited. Be sure to cite any quoted or paraphrased material using parenthetical page numbers).*

**Due 6/3/15**

*Boyer and Hall, Introduction and Chapters 1 and 2*

1. What is the task of this text? Explain your understanding.

2. How does the Greek word *logos* apply to *theos*?

3. Summarize the authors’ description of the meaning of “mystery.”

4. What does Genesis 1 reveal about Creator God?

5. What does “transcendence” imply?

*Chan, Chapter 8*

6. What insights did you gain regarding “spiritual reading”?

7. In what ways do Chan’s insights about biblical meditation stir your thinking?

*Scorgie, Chapters 1-4*

8. How does Scorgie distinguish between “authentic spirituality” and “holistic spirituality”?

9 and 10. Select two insights from the Coe, Boda, and Brown essays that surprised and/or challenged you.

**Due 6/8/15**

*Boyer and Hall, Chapter 3*

1. Discuss one new insight that especially “drew” you.

2. Discuss one new insight that surprised you.

*Scorgie, Chapters 12-18*

3. Respond to Augustine of Hippo and his “interior landscape” of Christian spirituality.

4. Which of the saints (select one or two) from the Middle Ages and the Reformation would you like to explore further? Describe what draws you to that person or those persons.

5. What is *ascesis* and how does it related to Christian spirituality?

6. What are some characteristics of ancient Christian spirituality that either surprise or challenge you?

7. Discuss one of the Byzantine Christianity “spiritual masters.” What do you see in this person that should merit additional study?

8. How did Dennis Martin define “contemplative union”?

9. How could contemplative union be experienced in the 21st century?

10. From the remaining three chapters, discuss a concept that was new to you regarding the study of Christian spirituality.

**Due 6/10/15**

*Boyer and Hall, Chapter 4*

1. How would you summarize the authors’ description of humans being image-bearers?

2. What was Christ’s achievement and what does being “in Christ” imply (79)?

3. Respond to this statement: “Cyril’s obedience to the psalmist’s command to ‘praise and glorify’ the Lord moves him past mere *description*—and for that very reason it justifies the work of theology, for worship increases his comprehension of the mystery and moves him deeper into its depths” (83).

*Chan, Chapters 3 and 7*

4. Respond to Chan’s definition or description of sin (57ff).

5. Explain some distinctions among the flesh (the sin in us), the world (the sin around us), and the devil (the sin beyond us).

6. What does Chan say is the answer to the problem of evil? Would you agree or disagree with his argument? Why?

7. On which of the spiritual exercises in Chapter 7 do you hope to focus as disciplines?

*Scorgie, Chapter 8*

8. How does Demarest’s essay shed light on or affirm the writings of Boyer/Hall and Chan regarding humanity, sin, and renewal in Christ?

**Due 6/15/15**

*Boyer and Hall, Chapter 5*

1. Does the definition of “Trinity” (101ff) help you to put words to the concept and in what way(s)?

2. Name and reflect on a few of the Trinitarian passages in the Bible from the list on 105.

3. What did you discover that helped your thinking about the Trinity?

*Chan, Chapters 5, 9, and 12*

4. What does *sanctorum communio* imply?

5. List the characteristics of community, according to Chan, with brief descriptive summaries for each.

6. What do you need to pay special attention to in order to be a good friend?

7. Chan concludes Chapter 9 with this sentence: “Only then is spirituality authentically Christian.” What does he mean by that?

8. Discuss why a chapter on spiritual direction is important to the overall discussion of community.

*Scorgie, Chapters 5 and 9*

9. What does Chan add to the discussion of “Trinity”?

10. What must be considered when Christian community disappoints (82ff)?

**Due 6/17/15**

*Boyer and Hall, Chapter 6*

1. What is the “grand miracle,” according to C. S. Lewis?

2. Discuss several points in the authors’ discussion of the Incarnation that were new, surprising, or challenging to you.

*Scorgie, Chapter 6*

3. What are the two different realms that come together in the Incarnation, according to Willard, and how does this affect the spirituality of Jesus and his followers?

4. What does Willard mean by the “great inversion”?

5. As a result of the Incarnation, what is available to followers of Jesus?

**Due 6/22/15**

*Boyer and Hall, Chapter 7*

1. What is the focus of the debate regarding salvation? Discuss some points on both sides of the debate.

2. What are your initial conclusions?

3. What is the “dubious assumption”?

4. What conclusions do the authors’ appeals to mystery yield?

*Chan, Chapters 4, 10, and 11*

5. What is “salvation history”?

6. How would you define “Justification,” “sanctification,” and “glorification,” based on your reading?

7. What is the purpose of a “rule of life”?

8. Why is discernment necessary when assessing problem areas in one’s spiritual life and progress?

*Scorgie, Chapters 25 and 32*

9. What did you learn about Christian mysticism?

10. How does grace relate to spiritual practices?