

Heresies and Errors

The Real-Life Impact of Theology Gone Bad

Course Introduction and Outline

Introduction to the Class

Our purpose in studying heresies and errors is to reflect on the (often) noble reasons why heresies and errors came into existence, to understand why each of them are attractive today, and to appreciate why they were rejected and should still be rejected today.

This class is not an academic tour through church history. It isn't even a study of ancient history. We'll look at heresies from every age: the Early Church, the age of the great creeds, the Reformation, Puritan England, 19th Century, and Modern times.

This is not a class to feel smug about ourselves! We won't be pointing fingers at the doctrinal failures of others, but we will be examining how and why heresy creeps into our own lives.

Course Outline

1. 1/16 - Marcionism - [On Scripture and the wrath of God] –
 - Isn't the New Testament God different and much nicer than the Old Testament God?
2. 1/30 – Gnosticism, Docetism, & Arianism - [On Person & Work of Christ] –
 - Surely God didn't really become human and die!
3. 2/6 - Donatism - [On Ecclesiology] –
 - How could "Real Christians" cave in the face of persecution and still be counted as part of the church?
4. 2/20 - Pelagianism and Antinomianism - [On Salvation by Grace and the Place of God's Law] –
 - What must we contribute to our salvation? Or, isn't faith opposed to Law?
5. 3/6 - Universalism - [On Atonement and Hell] –
 - How can a loving God condemn? What about those who have never heard about the gospel?
6. 3/20 - Liberalism [On Supernaturalism and Rationalism] –
 - How can modern sophisticated people believe in God?
7. 4/3 - The New Hermeneutic [On Interpreting the Bible] –
 - How can anyone claim to know what the Bible says? Isn't it just a subjective call?
8. 4/17 - Arminianism & New Worship styles [On Entertainment and Event-Worship] –
 - Shouldn't church be a lot more fun and popular than it is now?