

10th Grade Bible

Early Church Theology and Belief Systems

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This class is divided into two parts. First, it will examine the different belief systems predominant in the contemporary world, and discussing how those belief systems compare to the kingdom worldview. The class does not use an “us-versus-them” methodology. The culture Christians are commanded to reach is not the enemy. The Christian’s commission is to reach the culture, not figure out ways to kill it.

Second, the class will examine the narrative of Christian theology, beginning with the theology of the early church fathers through the medieval theologians, looking at how Christian theology developed through the centuries.

OBJECTIVES

1. The student will analyze different systems of beliefs from their own writings, and will be able to recognize the major tenets of said belief systems within a contemporary context.
2. The student will critically analyze each belief system, comparing to the kingdom worldview (Christianity).
3. The student will develop a method (not a defense) of engaging with different belief systems in a Christ-like manner.
4. The student will reconstruct the narrative of early church theologies, critiquing early Christian theology and understanding the historical context behind the theology.
5. The student will examine the history and major points of early Christian heresies, as well as how and why the church responded as she did.
6. The student will recognize how many of these early church heresies exists in contemporary culture.

TEXTBOOKS

Various reading will be required from primary sources of the early church fathers, such as Ignatius, Polycarp, and Thomas, as well as early heresies such as the Gnostic gospels, as well readings from various belief systems. Assignments and Socratic seminars will come from those readings.