

A New Heaven and a New Earth (7,5 ECTS credits)

Level: 1st cycle

Discipline: THEOLOGY (Systematic Theology, Theological Studies in Culture and Society)

Course ID: 0362

Admission requirements

General admission requirements for university studies. Students taking part in the course as a part of their Bachelor's degree program must have completed Course A, Introduction in Philosophy and Theology (30 ECTS credits). Students taking part in the course as a freestanding course are expected to have corresponding prior knowledge.

Educational goals

After having completed the course the students are expected to:

- Be able to give a general account of the interconnection between apocalyptics, cosmology and ecological ethics in the Christian faith and how the hope for a new heaven and a new earth in both premodern and modern theologies entail a discussion of humanity's ethical relation to the cosmos;
- Exhibit an understanding of different interpretations of the cosmological dimension of the Christian faith and how its hope for a new heaven and a new earth is linked to contemporary debates on climate change and the so-called Anthropocene;
- Discern how Christianity has been interpreted as both contesting and generating the binary division between culture and nature, the human and the rest of creation, that is said to be the root of the present ecological crisis;
- Show the ability to critically discuss how the biblical notion of humanity's dominion over creation can be interpreted and why the Christian idea of the human as a priest of creation has relevance in contemporary discussions on ecology and environmental ethics.

Course content

Christianity preaches the hope for a new heaven and a new earth. This eschatological hope does not entail the abolishment of the natural world but the anticipation of its redemption and fulfilment. But what does this apocalyptic message imply in a period of ecological challenges? Can it deepen our care for the world? In this course students will have an opportunity to analyse our caring for the world in relation to the hope for a new earth and a new heaven.

Teaching and examination

Instruction will be in the form of lectures and discussion seminars. The examination consists in participation in discussions and seminars, as well as a written essay at the end of the course (8-10

pages). This final paper may be written in English or Swedish. The course grade is based on the quality of the essay.

Bibliography

Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'* (Vatican, 2014), 80 pages:

https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html.

Roy Scranton, *Learning to Die in the Anthropocene: Reflections on the End of a Civilization* (City Lights Publishers, 2015), 144 pages.

Christopher Steck SJ, *All God's Animals: A Catholic Theological Framework for Animal Ethics* (Georgetown University Press, 2019), 249 pages.

John Zizioulas; John Chryssavgis and Nikolaos Asproulis (editors), *Priests of Creation: John Zizioulas on Discerning an Ecological Ethos* (T&T Clark, 2021), 236 pages.

Compendium of texts (about 250 pages).

See also "Kursplaner: allmänna bestämmelser" (Course plans: General rules)

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Valid as 2023-07-15