

**LIVING BELIEF:
THE SHAPE OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE
2010/11**

This part of the course will follow on from 'Exploring the New Testament', and has three parts: 'God and Creation' in term 1; 'Christ and Salvation' in term 2; 'Spirit and Church' in term 3. It looks at key Christian beliefs, where they came from, how they have been refined over time, and what the ethical spin-off may be. Full details will be set out in next year's leaflet.

BOOKS

You may well want to buy a few books to enrich your studies. If so, the Sarum College Bookshop offers a discount of 10%, or free packing and post, on all purchases of books by those registered or intending to register for *Theology Quest and Questions*.

If you would like some hints about helpful books to look at in advance, please contact Prof David Catchpole at Sarum College (01722-424800 or anndavid@catchpole.fslife.co.uk).

A UNIVERSITY CERTIFICATE

The course can, in both its halves, be taken just for interest. But it also provides over two years an opportunity for you to gain the University of Surrey's Certificate of Higher Education in Theology. If you are able to study for only the one year 2009/10, you have the opportunity to gain the University of Surrey's Foundation Certificate in Theology (New Testament).

To gain an award you need to write a small number of essays of modest size. After the first one we will advise you about continuing. Details of topics and reading lists will be provided at the outset. Sarum College has an excellent library, of which TQQ students become members.

COST

For those seeking the award of a Certificate, the course costs £100 per term during 2009/10. This drops to £90 per term for those who are 60 and over, full-time students and those who are benefit-dependent. For essay writers there is a further up-front non-refundable payment of £50 for the year to cover registration with the University of Surrey. If you cannot afford the appropriate fee, please consult the Programme Leader.

If you do not plan to work for a Certificate, the cost will be just £60 per term (£6 per individual session for those who wish or are able to come only occasionally).

THE TEACHING STAFF

David Catchpole (Programme Leader), Emeritus Professor of Theological Studies in the University of Exeter, and Scholar in Residence at Sarum College. He specialises in the study of the gospels, and is the author of *The Quest for Q* (1993), *Resurrection People* (2000), and *Jesus People* (2006).

David Way, Theological Education Secretary of the Church of England Ministry Division. He specialises in the study of Paul, and is the author of *The Lordship of Christ* (1993).

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**THEOLOGY QUEST
AND QUESTIONS**

2009-2010

**EXPLORING
THE NEW TESTAMENT**

A programme of study
which may lead to a University of Surrey
Certificate of Higher Education in Theology



in association with



THE QUEST AND THE QUESTIONS

The poet R S Thomas referred to him as 'this Nazarene nobody'. His story began two thousand years ago in an obscure and far from prestigious Palestinian township. From that obscure community, and amid the scepticism of the community itself, there emerged a religious preacher whose movement would change the world. How could this possibly be?

Our programme of study aims to address some of the persistent questions about him that called, and continue to call, for an answer. Our world is far away in time and space from his, but still his influence pervades it. An understanding of the person and the echoes of what he said and did is the object of our quest.

EXPLORING THE NEW TESTAMENT 2009/10

Pride of place among those who set about interpreting Jesus of Nazareth belongs to the writers of the gospels. But how should these big stories, constructed so subtly out of lots of short stories and pithy sayings, be handled? When they were originally heard, what message would the hearers have received? Would someone hearing one of them have heard the same message as someone hearing another? Deep and demanding questions! So term 1: *The Gospels*.

Many people have worked as textual archaeologists, digging below the surface of the gospels to recover what may be known about the historical Jesus. Sometimes they have produced a figure who is strikingly like themselves! Others have produced a stranger, someone bafflingly different and even uncomfortable, a focus of conflict as well as a means of healing. Testing though the exercise has always been, and always will be, it is an absorbing exercise, calling for skill, sharpness and sensitivity. So term 2: *The quest of the historical Jesus*.

Take a deep breath! After Jesus himself, no one has exerted as powerful an influence theologically as the apostle Paul. What strong reactions – everything from fervent admiration to fierce disapproval – this formidably intelligent and passionately dedicated Christian missionary has stirred! Even after two millennia, there is huge debate about what might be judged the core of his thinking. There is much work to be done in understanding him. So term 3: *Christianity according to Paul*.

That is the programme, split into terms. A week-by-week rundown for the whole year can also be supplied.

WHEN AND WHERE?

The first session proper will be on Tuesday 29 September 2009 at 7.00 p.m. in Sarum College. But there will be two preparatory and entirely free sessions before that for any who would like to come to them:

- A *taster evening* on Tuesday 15 September, when we will sample together 'the TQQ experience' – just to allow those who are thinking about joining the course to see what a typical Tuesday evening is like. We will dip our toes in the water of gospel study.

You don't have to come in order to register on the course, but if you would like to, you will be welcome. And it's absolutely free of charge!

- A *study skills evening* on Tuesday 22 September, when we will talk over together the business of how to read and study books economically and effectively, how to write essays, how to make best use of the College library – and how to feel confident! At least one former student will be coming to share his/her practical experience – opportunities to take, pitfalls to avoid.

All teaching sessions take place on Tuesday evenings, 7.00 – 9.00 (starting and ending promptly), with a coffee interval at half-time. They are spread over three terms of 10 weeks each, beginning in 2009/10 on 29 September, 12 January and 20 April. In addition there will be two discussion days (12 December and 27 March), devoted to any questions that you might like to raise.

SIGNING ON

Students have always brought to the course enormously varied experience. Some have never studied theology before, but their appetites have been whetted by questions which, in their minds, will not go away. Some want a 'refresher course' for in-service training. Some have enjoyed a Bishop's Certificate or 'Learning for Discipleship' course and want to extend their studies. Some have not written an essay for years and years, if at all, but they have been willing to try.

As befits a course mounted by a university, persons with no faith commitment at all are unreservedly welcome. So entry to the course is entirely open: your personal, educational or religious background is not an issue.

It is not necessary to register in advance. Just come to the first meeting.

WHAT PAST STUDENTS HAVE SAID

'These have been two wonderful years of theology. It has been a real experience, and one that was quite unexpected and unplanned.' *'I began the two years to prove to myself that I could still do it, and I have learnt so much that is not only of interest but keeps being useful.'* *It has deepened my faith and made me more comfortable with my uncertainties.'* *'The course has been addictively stimulating.'*