Course of Study  
Summer 2015  
Book List and Pre-Work

522: Theology in the Contemporary Church  
July 20-30, 11:00 AM-1:15 PM

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Book Titles (with author and ISBN number):
ISBN:0824519256  

Pre-Work Assignment:
Read Kierkegaard's *Fear and Trembling* (get the version suggested: Penguin Great Ideas, which is quite affordable). If you've read it before, re-read it. It's brief and highly engaging. It may take some time to digest, but it's one of the great books in Christian thought, so it is well worth the trouble. Though Kierkegaard wrote nearly a century before the time frame of this course, the ideas he deals with in *Fear and Trembling* will appear again and again, and some of the questions he explores will stay with us through our discussions.

For the first day of class, prepare a 4 to 5 page paper briefly addressing each of the following questions:
1. According to Kierkegaard, what is the dilemma at the heart of faith, as experienced by Abraham?
2. What is the “suspension of the ethical”?
3. What is the “leap” of faith?
4. How does Abraham’s isolation speak to the experience of God?
5. How does *Fear and Trembling* inspire or challenge you personally?

Quote the text appropriately, using quotes to illustrate your interpretation of Kierkegaard. Cite page numbers for your quotations. Feel free to email me with questions about this assignment.

Avoid the temptation to ask for an extension on this assignment. During the class itself, we will be reading quite intensively, and you will want to focus on that work, rather than trying to catch up from the very start.

Relatedly, as we will need to read enough to fuel two hours of class per day, any reading of the other course texts that you can do before we start will surely help you during July. The selected texts are all significant in their field, and are meant to expose us to a wide array of ideas; none contain opinions or views that I am prescribing to you, though understanding the ideas at play will be central to the course. All are food for thought, some are very provocative, and intentionally so. Remember that the goal of the course is to understand these theological movements and viewpoints, and by so doing, to better understand and command your own pastoral and theological voice.