Research Guide for Theology

Use the Master’s College Library Web site to access the library’s online catalog and the many online databases the library has to offer. The library’s Web site also provides information on how to do research, library services, hours, personnel, links to other libraries’ catalogs and links to other recommended scholarly Web Resources.

Dewey Decimal Classification Numbers

The TMC library’s collection is arranged according to the Dewey Decimal Classification System (DDC) with a few exceptions. An outline of the whole DDC can be found at Summaries: DDC. The following are the more common Dewey numbers used in the field of Theology:

230’s Christianity; Christian Theology
231 God (theology proper)
  231.1 God the father
  231.2 God the Son (for Jesus Christ see 232)
  231.3 God the Holy Spirit (Pneumatology)
  231.4 Attributes
  231.5 Providence
  231.6 Love & wisdom
  231.7 Relation to the world
  231.8 Justice and goodness
232 Jesus Christ & his family (Christology)
233 Humankind (anthropology)
234 Salvation (Soteriology) & grace
235 Spiritual beings (angelology)
236 Eschatology
237 [Unassigned]
238 Creeds & catechisms
239 Apologetics & polemics

Library of Congress Classification Numbers

The Master’s Seminary Library and many other libraries around the world use the Library of Congress Classification System (LC). For an outline of the entire LC System go to the Library of Congress Classification Outline. The following are the more common LC numbers used in the field of Theology:

Doctrinal Theology – BT
Practical Theology - BV

Catalog Search

The library’s Online Catalog is the index to all the resources the library provides. This is a good place to start looking for information related to the field of Theology. The following are suggestions for getting started with research in this field. This explanation will make more sense if you open another browser to the library’s catalog and follow along as you go.

Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH)

Search the library catalog for appropriate LC Subject Headings (not to be confused with the LC Classification System) to use in your research. Select the Subject tab and type in a broad subject term in the free text field. When you receive your hit list, be sure to examine any “See”, “See also” and “Note” links as they will lead you to important information about the subject heading and additional related terminology. For example the Info button for Eschatology reveals a dozen related terms. However a search for the following reveals instead of:
Angelology use Angels
Anthropology use Theological Anthropology
Ecclesiology use Church
Soteriology use Salvation,
Christology use Jesus Christ Person and offices,
Pneumatology use Holy Spirit or Spirit,
Hamartiology use Sin
Biblical theology use Bible theology but for collective works on Christian doctrine use Theology, Doctrinal and for works on the doctrines of non-Christian religions use the individual religion with subdivision Doctrines, e.g. Buddhism--Doctrines.
Also, be sure to scroll down the subject list once it has been retrieved. There will be many other related headings with subdivisions that will be valuable in focusing your search. Scrolling through the subject list of a broader term may help identify an appropriate term. Sometimes finding the record for a book that you know is on your topic will help you to identify appropriate Subject headings (see Research TIP below for more info.). Some terms have no references at all like bibliography. For these use all the helps given above and seek out the help of your local Reference Librarian who might tell you right off that ...

For topics related to bibliology use Bible Canon, Bible History, Bible manuscripts, Bible Versions, Bible Evidences, authority, etc., Bible Inspiration.

Suggestion: Because one third of this library’s collection is comprised of bible and theology related resources only use the Keyword anywhere field if the initial search retrieves very few or no records. Instead use appropriate terminology in the Title field or the Subject field. Again, only use Keyword if insufficient records are retrieved.

Reference and eReference Resources

The reference collection is one of the first places to start doing bibliographic research because the resources there will provide background information on the topic, contextual parameters of a topic, a ready made outline, expert authors in the field and perhaps even a bibliography of the best books on the topic.

To find appropriate reference books from the Advanced Search screen use the appropriate term as a Keyword and set the Location: to Reference.

eReference resources can be found using the eReferences portion of the library Web site. To find theological dictionaries and encyclopedias select the eReferences menu option and type “theol” in the free-text search box. All of
the eReference titles with the term "theology" or "theological" will be listed. Then simply select the desired title and begin searching.

To find hardcopy theological dictionaries go to the library catalog’s Advanced Search form and use theology dictionaries [all of these] in Subject field. Be sure to use the plural "dictionaries” and not the singular “dictionary”.

Or browse the Reference section for these:

- A dictionary of early Christian beliefs : a reference guide to more than 700 topics discussed by the Early Church Fathers - 270.1 D561b, 1998
- A handbook of Christian theology : definition essays on concepts and movements of thought in contemporary Protestantism - 230.03 H191h
- A handbook of theological terms - 230.03 H262h, 1964
- A student's dictionary for biblical and theological studies - 220.3 S94h, 1983
- An introduction to theological research : a guide for college and seminary students - 230.072 B233i, 2000
- An introductory theological wordbook - 230.03 C898i
- Baker's dictionary of theology - 230.044 B178h
- Cyclopaedia of Biblical, theological, and ecclesiastical literature - 230.03 M132c
- Dictionary of Latin and Greek theological terms : drawn principally from Protestant scholastic theology - 230.03 M916d
- Encyclopaedia of religion and ethics - 200.3 En19h, 1928
- Evangelical dictionary of theology - 230.044 E14e, 2001
- New dictionary of theology - 230.03 N42f, 1988
- The New international dictionary of New Testament theology (NIDNTT) –225.3 N42b
- New international dictionary of Old Testament theology & exegesis (NIDOTT) 221.3 N42v, 1997
- Oxford dictionary of the Christian Church - 230.003 Ox2c
- The Dictionary of Bible and religion - 230.03 D561g
- The Encyclopedia of Christianity - 230.02 En19p
- The New Schaff-Herzog encyclopedia of religious knowledge (Variant Title: Twentieth century encyclopedia of religious knowledge) - 230.03 Sch14n, 1949 Online access: http://www.ccel.org/s/schaff/encyc/home.html
- The Oxford companion to Christian thought - 230.03 Ox2h, 2000
- The Westminster dictionary of Christian theology - 230.03 W528r

**Main Books**

To find materials in the main circulating collection use the same search strategy used to find reference books but without setting the Limits option to Reference. For example, from the Advanced search mode type in appropriate search term(s) in the “Search for:” free text field, select the most suitable Boolean operation (“any of these”, “all of these”, “as a phrase”) and then select an applicable field from the “Search in:” drop down menu.

**Research TIP 1: Use Sources to Find Other Sources** -- when relevant records are identified search the Call Numbers and Subject Headings found with those records to identify additional related resources. Also, scroll through the hit list and identify the most commonly used Dewey Classification numbers and then browse the shelves in those areas.

**eBooks:** The library has over 60,000 electronic books, many of which are electronic reference books. These ebooks do have the full-text. Access to the library's e-books is limited to TMC faculty, staff and students.

Accessing ebooks found in the library catalog is as simple as clicking on the link "Connect to book" corresponding to the "Linked Resources" field in the "Holdings Information" portion of the record (bottom of the page). When you are off campus and you've made the connection to the online resource, you will be prompted for either your MasterNet id/password or your NetLibrary id/password.

**NOTE:** If the ebook is part of our NetLibrary collection you will not be able to access the ebook off campus unless you first create your own account and password from a computer while you are on campus. To create your own account with NetLibrary, go to http://www.netlibrary.com while logged onto your computer on campus. Then select “Create a Free Account” (top right corner of screen) and simply follow the instructions for creating your own id/password to use with NetLibrary.

**At the moment, the library catalog will not identify articles found in journals and magazines.** To find articles one must use a periodical index (see Periodicals below). However, the library is in the process of obtaining Primo Discovery and Delivery Service by ExLibris – a new method of searching our catalog as well as all of our periodical indexes and databases simultaneously. Estimated arrival time: early March, 2011. For more information watch this video: Primo on YouTube: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fDc6kJo6SX8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fDc6kJo6SX8).

**For commentaries** on specific books of the Bible use the Subject Search screen and search for the book of the bible with the word commentaries (e.g. malachi commentaries). For those books with the same name like John and Corinthians, use the Arabic numerals 1st, 2nd, 3rd not the Roman I, II, III. Scroll through the hit list and identify the most common Dewey Classification number and browse the shelves in that area. For more details about how the DDC treats the Bible see the Library Research Guide – Biblical Studies.

**Note:** LC subject headings use Roman numerals for chapter headings and Arabic numerals for verse distinctions (e.g. Bible. N.T. Luke X, 38- XVI, 18 = Luke 10:38-16:18).
Audio – Video Resources

To retrieve records reflecting the library’s holdings in a specific format such as video, DVD, CD or audio cassette from the library catalog use the Advanced Search screen and set the Format: to Sound Recording or Videorecording as appropriate. Search for a broad topic or specific keyword befitting the information need.

TMC Chapel messages as well as Truth & Life Conference messages are also available on MP3. The means for connecting to these MP3 files is the same as for connecting to ebooks, simply click on the link related to the "Online Resource" field in the catalog record (see ebooks above).

Finding Periodicals

Magazines, Journals, Newspapers

For all periodical titles available through the TMC library go to the library Web site and select Find Journals from the menu on the left. From this page you can find periodicals by title or by subject. There are also links to the online indexes that provide full-text articles. Find Articles indicates which periodical titles are held by the library as well as inclusive dates and format availability -- microform, print, electronic.

Again, the library is in the process of obtaining Primo Discovery and Delivery Service by ExLibris – a new method of searching our catalog as well as all of our periodical indexes and databases simultaneously. Estimated arrival time: early March, 2011. For more information watch this video: Primo on YouTube: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fDc6kJo6SX8.

Periodical Indexes

Periodical Indexes are used to identify the location of articles contained in magazines, journals and newspapers. These indexes provide citations to the articles (author, title of the article, journal title, volume, issue, date, and page numbers). Some indexes also provide abstracts (includes a summary of the article) and many online indexes provide the full-text (FT) of the article (e.g. the complete text of the article).

To access the indexes available to the TMC community go to library Web site and select Find Articles. Use the various search options to identify all available print and electronic indexes by journal title or by the use of the Topic/Type matrix.

CHECK FOR FULL TEXT is a very valuable research aid in the course of searching an online index. If the index being searched does not provide the full text, CHECK FOR FULL TEXT will search for the article in all of the other online indexes. If it is available, the article will be retrieved. If it is hardcopy in the library, a link to the library catalog will be retrieved. In the event the TMC library does not have the journal in question, Check for Full Text also provides a link to our interlibrary loan service.

Once the Primo search service is in place, Check for Full Text will no longer be necessary.

Listed below are periodical indexes and other databases containing various types of resources that are of particular interest to the field of Theology.

Religious Indexes

ATLAReligion with Serials (EBSCO) indexes a broad range of religious journals, multi-author works and book reviews. ATLA permits searching by Scripture Citation. However, unlike LCSH ATLA's Scripture Citation and Scripture Citation Phrase utilize only Arabic numerals. For example: Corinthians, 2nd 11: 23-25. NOTE: there must be a space between the colon and the verse designation.

Christian Periodical Index (EBSCO) indexes only evangelical journals.

New Testament Abstracts (EBSCO) article abstracts, review abstracts, book abstracts, and software abstracts in numerous languages.

Old Testament Abstracts (EBSCO) Indexing and abstracts for journal articles, monographs, multi-author works, and software related to Old Testament studies.

ProQuest Religion – covers religious issues and perspectives, including religious news and information, commentary on topics of general interest from the perspective of a particular religion, and formal theological studies.

Secular Indexes

Academic Search (EBSCO) Multi-disciplinary, index covering virtually every area of academic study, including peer-reviewed publications.

ProQuest Research Library - Academic subjects indexed & abstracted with full text from magazines, journals and newspapers.

Cambridge Collections Online (CCO) - collections of essays addressing topics and figures significant to the fields of Literature, Philosophy, Religion and Culture (electronic reference books; some titles also available in print).

Credo Reference - An online reference library that provides access to reference books including encyclopedias, dictionaries, thesauri and books of quotations.

Early English Books Online - From the first book published in English through the age of Spenser and Shakespeare, this incomparable collection contains about 100,000 titles published between 1475-1700.

Encyclopaedia Britannica Online - authoritative encyclopedia

**Oxford English Dictionary** (OED) - The accepted authority on the English language. It is an unsurpassed guide to the meaning, history, and pronunciation of words, both present and past.


**TREN** - The Theological Research Exchange Network is a library of over 10,000 theological thesis/dissertation titles representing research from as many as 70 different institutions. TREN also makes available conference papers presented at annual meetings of several academic societies. Print titles may be ordered online.

By special arrangement TMC/S students may download E-docs for free! The only caveat is that tren.com must be accessed through the library Web site. Use the link above or from www.masters.edu/library, select "Find Articles” and type "tren” in the free-text search box. Once logged in to the TREN site, select “Click here to search our edocs”. You’ll know you’re in the proper place to download free edocs because a bright green banner will appear at the top of the page welcoming you to The Master’s College and Seminary subscription.

**WorldCat** - the combined catalogs of thousands of libraries worldwide; especially useful for a review of the literature

**Web Sites**

**Abbreviations used in religious studies**

**Archives Bookshop**

**Baker’s Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology**

**eBibleNotes: online Bible Study Tools**

**Sound Word Associates**

**Believe: Religious Information Source**

**Buck’s Theological Dictionary**

**Christian Classics Ethereal Library**

**Creeds, Confessions, Catechisms**

**CUFTS eJournal Locator**

**Summa Theologica**

**Additional Research Guides:**

**Biblical Studies** – unique strategies useful for research in this field

**Basic Steps in Library Research** – six simple steps explaining the research process

**From Cite to Hand - Books** – how to actually obtain books and other materials whether or not the library owns them

**From Cite to Hand - Articles** – how to actually obtain magazine and journal articles whether or not the library owns them

**Finding Articles in Two, sometimes Three, OK maybe Four Easy Steps**

**Identifying Scholarly Books** – clues for distinguishing scholarly books and journals

**Identifying Scholarly Periodicals** - clues for distinguishing between magazines, journals and peer reviewed journals

**Evaluating Resources** – easy way to help evaluate the usefulness of research resources both paper and electronic

**Research Worksheet** – designed to make research simpler by working step by step through the research process

**Copyright for Higher Education** – help in understanding the copyright law as it pertains to faculty and students

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