

Example of essay on kathryn tanner

[Religion](#), [God](#)



Kathryn Tanner joined the faculty of Divinity at Yale in 2010. This was after teaching in the Divinity School of the University of Chicago for sixteen years and the department of Religious studies at Yale for ten years. She has engineered a lot of research on the history of Christian thought to current issues of theological concern using cultural, feminist, and social theory. She has written several books such as; *God and Creation in Christian Theology: Tyranny or Empowerment?* *The politics of God: Christian Theologies and Social Justice*, *Theories of Culture: A New Agenda for Theology* *Jesus, Humanity and the Trinity: A Brief Systematic Theology*, *Economy of Grace* and *Christ the Key*. She has also written chapters in books like *The Oxford Handbook of Systematic Theology* and many scholarly articles.

Tanner is also a member of the editorial board of *Modern Theology*, *Scottish Journal of Theology*, and *International Journal of Systematic Theology*. She also worked with the *Journal of Religion* where she was a former co-editor.

Tanner was active in numerous professional societies. She was a past president of the oldest theological society that existed in the United States, *The American Theological Society*. Tanner is also a member of the *Theology Committee*, which advises the House of Bishops of the Episcopal Church. She had a Luce Fellowship in the Academic Year 2010-2011 where she did research on financial markets and the perspectives that Christian Theology has on them.

In *Christ is the Key* by Kathryn Tanner, the thesis is stated in the title. This is not a new claim in theology, but Tanner believes that when an individual has a better understanding of Jesus and what God accomplishes through him, it can give a new light to topics in theology. The manifestation of the Word of

Christ comes from the intense and intimate relationship between humans and God. This results to God giving Christians the gift of his own life. This is the basis for Tanner's study of the centrality of Jesus Christ in all Christian thought and life. As much as the ways of God are beyond our grasp, Jesus is seen as the key to the pattern that unites the divine and the human.

Her choice of the title was a good move. "Christ is the key" is significant because it informs the reader about how through Jesus people can become righteous. By so doing, she creates a difference linking justification and sanctification. Justification is the divine declaration that the sinner is righteous in the eyes of God. Justification is made through the crediting of the uprightness of Jesus Christ; however, it only occurs only once. Therefore, through Jesus as the path to righteousness he is the key; hence, making the topic of Tanner makes sense.

Sanctification, on the other hand, is the continual process of being holier. Therefore, it is the progressive conformity of the justified sinner; made into the image of Jesus Christ. Therefore, the difference between justification and sanctification is that Justification happens on the outside of the sinner while sanctification is made on the inside where a justified sinner becomes more righteous. The other distinction is that sanctification is a continual process while justification only occurs once in the life of the sinner. Both Justification and sanctification cannot be made possible without Jesus whom God sent to be a way to righteousness making him the key.

Kathryn Tanner takes up the Catholic debate about whether the nature of humans is directed to grace by a desire that is natural for grace. She rejects the whole Thomist Aristotelian terminologies that desires are rooted in

human nature. Her opinion is that the desire that human have for God comes from His gracious presence and not human nature. She mentions that this presence is necessary for the well-being of humans.

The book develops an innovative theology that is Christ-centered. It sheds light on main theological issues like the imago dei, the implication of the Trinity for human community, the relationship between grace and nature, and the way the spirit works in human life. According to *Christ is the Key*, humanity is purified from sin and given participation in God's life when the Word takes over human nature through incarnation. For Tanner, the key to Christology is incarnation. According to the book, incarnation is understood not only as the event of Jesus' conception, but also the permeation of the Word in human nature that is completed in his resurrection and Ascension. After this, *Christ is the Key* to all else.

The book is a single argument on how understanding Christ has an effect on the various theological topics. The discussion on human nature is seen in the first three chapters of the book. According to this book, humanity is oriented by grace from the beginning of the image of God. Humanity is, therefore, made for the grace that unlocks the divine life. Human nature cannot function well without grace. These chapters of the book explain how understanding Christ clarifies the interrelations of the trinity, atonement and sacrifice, political theology and how the spirit works in the world.