

04ST5250 Systematic Theology 3 Syllabus

Ecclesiology and the Sacraments

Reformed Theological Seminary
Spring 2020—Atlanta Campus
Tuesdays 2pm-4pm

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Course Description

This course will cover **ecclesiology** (the doctrine of the church) and **the sacraments** (the doctrines of baptism and the Lord's Supper). Our study of these topics will be based on the exegesis of Scripture, but with continual reference to historical theology as well. We must remember that while we rely upon the Bible as our ultimate authority in matters of faith and life, we also “stand on the shoulders” of approximately 2000 years of history in our interpreting and applying of the Bible. As the well-known Puritan William Perkins says (from *The Workes of... William Perkins*, vol. 3, 1618, p. 104):

Though the best men's works be but base stuff to the pure word of God, yet the writings of holy men must not be condemned, but must be read and regarded in their place, for our furnishing and enabling to the study of the scriptures, for the helping of our knowledge and judgment in the word of God. They that hold or practise the contrary know not what helps they be and what light they yield to many dark places of scripture.

Prerequisites

Students should be familiar with the concepts covered in Louis Berkhof's *Manual of Christian Doctrine* and/or Donald Macleod's *A Faith to Live By* before the start of any Systematic Theology class.

Students who are struggling with seeing the importance of Systematic Theology to ministry and to preaching, teaching, and counseling may be helped by the following quotations and resources:

“To be effective preachers [teachers, counselors] you must be sound theologians.”
(Charles Spurgeon)

“[L]earning...is essential to a successful ministry.” (Charles Spurgeon)

“[T]heology helps the preacher [teacher, counselor] as the coach helps the tennis player....As the coach is the embodiment of decades of experience in playing tennis, so theology is the embodiment of centuries of study, debate and interpretative interaction as the church has sought to understand the Scriptures. One can play tennis after a fashion without ever having been coached, and one can preach from the Bible after a fashion without ever having encountered serious theology in a serious way. But, just as one is likely to play better with coaching, so one is likely to preach

better—more perceptively, more searchingly, more fruitfully—when helped by theology; and so the preacher who is theologically competent will, other things being equal, be more use to the church.” (JI Packer, “The Preacher as Theologian,” p. 316)

The following three resources may also be helpful in thinking through the relevancy of this course to preaching, teaching, and counseling:

Donald Macleod, “Preaching and Systematic Theology,” in *The Preacher and Preaching*, ed. Sam T. Logan (P&R, 1986), 246-272.

JI Packer, “The Preacher as Theologian: Preaching and Systematic Theology,” in *Honouring the Written Word of God: The Collected Shorter Writings of JI Packer*, vol. 3 (Paternoster, 1999), 301-316.

John Murray, “Systematic Theology,” in *Collected Writings of John Murray*, vol. 4 (Banner of Truth, 1977), 1-21.

Course Objectives

The principal aim of Systematic Theology is to provide students with a comprehensive understanding of the main doctrines of Christianity, specifically in those areas mentioned above in the Course Description. It is expected that students will have a competent grasp of the issues involved in this course and a facility to communicate them with some fluency. Since many branches of the church require their ordained clergy not only to commit to these doctrines in a more or less strict sense but also to be able to articulate them when examined, these things are also in mind as objectives in this course as well. Most importantly, since all theology has worship as its end, this course will seek to foster deeper devotion and faithfulness to our great God and King by deepening our knowledge of Him and our reverence for Him. He is indeed worthy of all we are and have!

Course Requirements

I. Required Reading

John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (Westminster/John Knox, 1559 edition, Battles translation), Book 4, chapters 1-5, 12-15, and 17-20, which can be found on pages 1011-1102, 1229-1323, and 1359-1521. (350 pages)

Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms (Free Presbyterian Publications): chapters 21 and 25-31. (24 pages)

Geerhardus Vos, *Reformed Dogmatics*, vol. 5, *Ecclesiology, The Means of Grace, and Eschatology*, trans. and ed. Richard B. Gaffin, Jr. (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016), pp. 3-249. (247 pages)

Sinclair B. Ferguson, *The Holy Spirit* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1996), chapters 9-10. (48 pages)

Guy M. Richard, *Baptism: Answers to Common Questions* (Sanford, FL: Reformation Trust, 2019). (115 pages)

II. Class Attendance

Class attendance is imperative for successful completion of this course.

III. Evaluation

1. **Course Paper** (50%). **Due Date: May 12.**

A 10-12 page theological paper (in Times New Roman 12pt font) is required for this course. Each student will select any one (1) of the following books that he or she finds most meaningful (please discuss it in advance with the professor and secure his approval). The paper must evaluate the book biblically, theologically, and historically and draw applications and conclusions that would be relevant for his or her particular ministry or for the church in general. If the student knows Greek and Hebrew, the paper should reflect this knowledge in the exegesis of Biblical passages.

Please use Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers* (8th edition) with footnotes instead of endnotes.

Kevin DeYoung and Greg Gilbert, *What is the Mission of the Church?: Making Sense of Social Justice, Shalom, and the Great Commission* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2011). (252 pages)

Thomas R. Schreiner and Shawn D. Wright, eds., *Believer's Baptism: Sign of the New Covenant in Christ* (Nashville, TN: B&H, 2006). (choose at least 5 chapters)

Graham Tomlin, *The Provocative Church* (Cincinnati, OH: Forward Movement, 2015). (192 pages)

Mark Dever and Paul Alexander, *The Deliberate Church: Building Your Ministry on the Gospel* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2005). (189 pages)

Eric Mason, *Woke Church: An Urgent Call for Christians in America to Confront Racism and Injustice* (Chicago: Moody, 2018). (192 pages)

John Owen, *The True Nature of a Gospel Church*, in *The Works of John Owen*, vol. 16, ed., William H. Goold (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1968). (208 pages)

Malcolm Maclean, *The Lord's Supper* (Fearn, Ross-shire: Mentor, 2009). (210 pages)

Guy Prentiss Waters, *How Jesus Runs the Church* (Philipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2011). (180 pages)

Michael O. Emerson and Christian Smith, *Divided By Faith: Evangelical Religion and the Problem of Race in America* (Oxford: OUP, 2000). (181 pages)

4. **Final Exam** (50%). **Due Date: May 12 in class.**

The examination will be a lengthy and detailed test of the student's mastery of all the material covered in the course lectures and reading and will require the student to apply principles learned in the course to practical test cases.

5. **Extra Credit (10%). Due Date: May 12.**

Students may earn significant extra credit by researching and writing a 7-10 page paper (Times New Roman 12pt font) on any other of the books listed above on which they did not write their main paper. All papers are due with the Final Exam. Please use Turabian, *A Manual for Writers* (8th edition) with footnotes instead of endnotes.

Course Lecture Schedule

The following is the tentative schedule for the course:

February 4	Syllabus and Course Overview, Introduction, What is the Church?
February 11	The Church in Redemptive History and in the NT
February 18	The Nature of the Church; The Church and the Kingdom
February 25	The Necessity of the Church; The Attributes of the Church
March 3	The Marks of the Church
March 10	The Growth of the Church; The Mission of the Church
March 17	Church Government
March 24	Church Government
March 31	Means of Grace; Sacraments overview
April 7	No class—Spring Break
April 14	Baptism
April 21	Baptism
April 28	Lord's Supper
May 5	Lord's Supper

Office Hours

I am available to meet with students after class, during lecture breaks, or by appointment. Please contact my assistant Allison Gamble to set up a meeting.

Assignments

The due dates for all assignments are listed above. Any assignments received after these dates will be considered late and will receive a 3-point grade reduction for every day past the deadline. Please be sure that everything you hand in has your full name on it.

Paper Grading Guide

The following criteria will be used in grading all written papers for this course:

Thesis Statement—(15%)

- Clear, brief description of thesis statement (5)
- No thesis statement (0)

Development (i.e., does the paper have a beginning, middle, and end?)—(15%)

- Coherent (5)
- Begins well, but...(4)
- Fall apart after the first page (3)
- Stream of consciousness (2)
- Can't make heads or tails of it (1)

No paper (0)

Content—(40%)

Shows thorough grasp of the material AND some independent thinking (5)

Shows thorough grasp of the material AND some borrowed thinking (4)

Raises more issues than can be answered (3)

Doesn't contain enough data to deal with the issue (2)

Has virtually no content (1)

No paper (0)

Bibliography—(10%)

Solid bibliographical content (5)

Adequate bibliography (3)

Inadequate bibliography (2)

No bibliography (0)

Errors—(20%)

Shows a thorough grasp of Turabian formatting style (5)

Uses a different style, even with some coherence (4)

Some grammatical and/or typographical errors (3)

Solecisms abounding (2)

Paper written in a language other than English (1)

No paper (0)

Late Papers—(reduction of final grade by 5% per day from the due date)

The grade I will assign you is based upon your fulfillment of the instructions for the assignment, the overall quality of your presentation, my assessment of your grasp of the subject matter, your skill in communication of the material, and how well you did your work in comparison with your peers in the class.

Course Objectives Related to MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes

Course: 04ST5250 Systematic Theology 3

Professor: Guy M. Richard

Campus: Atlanta

Date: Spring 2020

<u>MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes</u>		<u>Rubric</u>	<u>Mini-Justification</u>
<p><i>In order to measure the success of the MDiv curriculum, RTS has defined the following as the intended outcomes of the student learning process. Each course contributes to these overall outcomes. This rubric shows the contribution of this course to the MDiv outcomes.</i></p> <p><i>*As the MDiv is the core degree at RTS, the MDiv rubric will be used in this syllabus.</i></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Strong ➤ Moderate ➤ Minimal ➤ None 	
Articulation (oral & written)	Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, and cultural/global information, including details, concepts, and frameworks. Also includes ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.	Strong	Students are expected to become articulate in expressing defending major points of doctrine.
Scripture	Significant knowledge of the original meaning of Scripture. Also, the concepts for and skill to research further into the original meaning of Scripture and to apply Scripture to a variety of modern circumstances. (Includes appropriate use of original languages and hermeneutics; and integrates theological, historical, and cultural/global perspectives.)	Strong	Scriptural justification is required for the doctrinal concepts articulated in this class. Students are expected to engage in exegetical studies.
Reformed Theology	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Strong	This course examines the issues raised by Reformed Theology.
Sanctification	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Moderate	All truth is unto godliness.
Desire for Worldview	Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.	Moderate	Students are expected to think of how the doctrines explored form a cohesive worldview.
Winsomely Reformed	Embraces a winsomely Reformed ethos. (Includes an appropriate ecumenical spirit with other Christians, especially Evangelicals; a concern to present the Gospel in a God-honoring manner to non-Christians; and a truth-in-love attitude in disagreements.)	Strong	Students are urged to defend their doctrinal positions winsomely. This approach is modeled in the classroom.
Pastoral Ministry	Ability to minister the Word of God to hearts and lives of both church and unchurched, to include preaching, teaching, leading in worship, leading, and shepherding the local congregation, aiding in spiritual maturity, concern for non-Xns.	Strong	Studying theology should, all things being equal, make students better preachers, teachers, counselors, and pastors.