

## **Doctrine of Baptism (ST6105)**

Reformed Theological Seminary Atlanta

Summer 2020

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### **Class Schedule**

This class will meet via Zoom on the following dates and times:

July 13-16, 2pm-4pm

July 20-21, 2pm-4pm

July 27-30, 2pm-4pm

August 3-5, 2pm-4pm

### **Class Description**

This course will offer an in-depth study of the doctrine of baptism. It will examine the major views of baptism and their strengths and weaknesses, both from a biblical-theological perspective and from an historical perspective. The historical survey will focus especially on the theologians, the writings, and the archeological evidence of the early church but will also devote time to the Middle Ages and the Reformation and post-Reformation periods. The course will strive to do everything in a fair and gracious spirit that fosters increased unity in the church and increased devotion to Christ.

### **Required Reading**

John Armstrong, ed., *Understanding Four Views on Baptism* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007).

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

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

Students will also be required to read an article or two that will be made available by the professor prior to the article being discussed in class.

*\*It is expected that students will have their Bibles with them during class.*

### **Student Evaluation**

**1. Required Reading: 20% of final grade. Date Due: August 21, 2020.**

Students will report on the percentage of reading they have completed over the course of the semester. If the student does not report the percentage of the reading they have completed, it will be assumed that they have not completed any of it.

**2. Class participation: 30% of final grade.**

Because this course is largely a seminar-style course with heavy discussion and interaction, students will be graded on their participation in daily discussions.

**3. Research Paper: 50% of final grade. Date Due: August 21, 2020.**

Students will be expected to complete a 10-12 page research paper on any topic connected to baptism. This paper should provide a biblical, theological, and historical examination of a topic, book, or passage of Scripture. This could mean a critical interaction with any of the books required for this class or listed in the bibliography section. Students should count on citing and interacting with at least 1 good reference per page of paper length. So, for a 10 page paper, students should cite and interact with at least 10 good sources relating to the topic at hand. It is expected that each paper will engage with the original languages (assuming that the student has already had them) and provide critical engagement by either arguing for or against a certain position regarding baptism.

**All work is due by Friday, August 21, at 11:59pm.** Everything must be submitted by email to the professor at the above email address by the deadline. Late submissions will be accepted but will merit a deduction of 3 percentage points per day off of what would otherwise be the student's grade (i.e., if student earned a 95 on given assignment [out of total of 100 points] and was 2 days late, the student's final grade would be an 89 [i.e., 95 – 6 points = 89]). The 3 percentage-point penalty will begin at 12:00am on August 22 (according to the date and time stamped on the email). This penalty will be waived only if a student is providentially hindered from completing the assignments on time (i.e., death, hospitalization, etc.) and/or has made prior arrangements with the professor.

**Tentative Lecture Schedule**

Monday, July 13—Course introduction. Introduction to baptism.

Tuesday, July 14—What is baptism?

Wednesday, July 15—What is baptism?

Thursday, July 16—The meaning and mode of baptism.

Monday, July 20—The meaning and mode of baptism

Tuesday, July 21—The meaning and mode of baptism.

Monday, July 27—The recipients of baptism.

Tuesday, July 28—The recipients of baptism.

Wednesday, July 29—The recipients of baptism.

Thursday, July 30—Critique of specific recent articles.

Monday, August 3—Critique of specific recent articles.

Tuesday, August 4—What does history and archeology teach us?

Wednesday, August 5—What does history and archeology teach us? Wrap-up.

**Select Texts for Additional Reading**

Kurt Aland, *Did the Early Church Baptize Infants?* (London: SCM Press, 1962).

JG Davies, *The Architectural Setting of Baptism* (London: Barrie & Rockliff, 1962).

Everett Ferguson, *Baptism in the Early Church: History, Theology, and Liturgy in the First Five Centuries* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009).

JV Fesko, *Word, Water, and Spirit: A Reformed Perspective on Baptism* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2010).

Joachim Jeremias, *Infant Baptism in the First Four Centuries*, trans. David Cairns (London: SCM Press, 1960).

Joachim Jeremias, *The Origins of Infant Baptism: A Further Study in Reply to Kurt Aland*, trans. Dorothea M. Barton (London: SCM Press, 1963).

Paul K. Jewett, *Infant Baptism and the Covenant of Grace* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978).

Jeffrey D. Johnson, *The Fatal Flaw of the Theology Behind Infant Baptism* (Free Grace Press, 2010).

David Kingdon, *Children of Abraham: A Reformed Baptist View of Baptism, the Covenant, and Children* (Sussex: Carey Publications, 1973).

Fred A. Malone, *The Baptism of Disciples Alone* (Founders Press, 2007).

John Murray, *Christian Baptism* (Philipsburg, NJ: P&R, 1992).

William Wall, *The History of Infant Baptism*, 2 vols. (1705; London: Griffith, Farran, Okeden, & Welsh, n.d.).

Rowland S. Ward, *Baptism in Scripture and History: A Fresh Study of the Meaning and Mode of Christian Baptism* (Brunswick: Globe Press, 1991).