

Dr David Gibson
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Trinity Church, Aberdeen

RTS Dallas, Fall 2022
OT6370 Ecclesiastes
2 Credit Hours
Friday 11 November, 6-9pm
Saturday 12 November, 9am-5pm

OT6370 Ecclesiastes

I. Course Description

Through a series of lectures (and focusing particularly on Ecclesiastes) we will consider dominant themes in the wisdom literature - Wisdom, Perspective, Time, Death, Life, Desire, Mystery - and at each point explore some of the theological issues involved in grappling with these themes. The course will seek to immerse the student in the distinctive worldview of Ecclesiastes in particular, and the wisdom literature in general, while showing how it is an integral part of biblical revelation and redemptive history which shines a light on the person and work of Christ.

II. Course Objectives

- a. *Grasp* the dominant themes of the wisdom literature
- b. *Engage* with some recent evangelical treatments of this literature
- c. *Consider* the challenges of preaching these books in a Christ-centred way effectively
- d. *Enthuse* the student for reading, preaching, teaching this often neglected literature

III. Course Requirements

- a. Prepare and submit a 1000 word summary of *any ONE* of the following three books:
 - David Gibson, *Living Life Backward*
 - Todd J. Billings, *The End of the Christian Life*
 - Matthew McCullough, *Remember Death: The Surprising Path to Living Hope*
- b. Prepare and submit a 1000 word summary of the strengths and weaknesses of any *ONE* of the *commentaries* below
- c. Watch Terence Malick's film *The Tree of Life* and read Peter J. Leithart's book, *Shining Glory: Theological Reflections on the Tree of Life* (in whichever

order you wish), and write a 500 word reflection on the effectiveness or otherwise of Malick's offering.

d. Read the attached three *Desiring God* articles by David Gibson on Ecclesiastes. Sent separately. No written summary needed.

e. All course requirements must be submitted by 5PM, January 13th, 2023

IV. Course Grading

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|-----------|--------------|------|
| A | (97-100) | 4.00 |
| A- | (94-96) | 3.66 |
| B+ | (91-93) | 3.33 |
| B | (88-90) | 3.00 |
| B- | (86-87) | 2.66 |
| C+ | (83-85) | 2.33 |
| C | (80-82) | 2.00 |
| C- | (78-79) | 1.66 |
| D+ | (75-77) | 1.33 |
| D | (72-74) | 1.00 |
| D- | (70-71) | 0.66 |
| F | (below 70) | 0.00 |
| I | (incomplete) | — |
| W | (withdraw) | — |

V. Course Reading.

Commentaries

Derek Kidner, *The Message of Ecclesiastes* (BST)

Tremper Longman III, *The Book of Ecclesiastes* (NICOT)

Iain Provan, *Ecclesiastes/Song of Songs* (NIV Application)

Robert Fyall, *Ruth, Esther, Ecclesiastes, S of S, Lamentations*

Craig Bartholomew, *Ecclesiastes* (Baker Commentary on the OT)

Christopher Ash, *Job: The Wisdom of the Cross* (Preaching the Word)

Douglas Sean O'Donnell, *Ecclesiastes* (Reformed Expository Commentary)

Philip Ryken, *Ecclesiastes: Why Everything Matters*

Jeffrey Myers, *A Table in the Mist: Ecclesiastes through new eyes*

Bruce Waltke, *The Book of Proverbs, vols, 1 & 2* (NICOT)

Graham Goldsworthy, *The Tree of Life: Reading Proverbs Today*

Raymond C. Ortlund, *Proverbs: Wisdom that Works* (Preaching the Word)

Douglas Sean O'Donnell, *The Song of Solomon: An Invitation to Intimacy* (Preaching the Word)

Tremper Longman III, *Song of Songs* (NICOT)

Ellen F. Davis, *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and the Song of Songs*

James M. Hamilton Jr, *Song of Songs: A Biblical-Theological-Allegorical-Christological Interpretation*

Iain M. Duguid, *The Song of Songs* (Tyndale OT Commentaries)

Books

David Gibson, *Living Life Backward* (Crossway)

Todd J. Billings, *The End of the Christian Life* (Baker Academic)

Matthew J. McCullough, *Remember Death: The Surprising Path to Living Hope* (Crossway)

Goldsworthy, *Gospel and Wisdom* (Paternoster Press)

Douglas Wilson, *Joy at the End of the Tether* (Canon Press)

Barry Webb, *Five Festal Garments* (NSBT series)

Peter J. Leithart, *Solomon Among the Postmoderns* (Brazos Press)

Zack Eswine, *Recovering Eden: The Gospel According to Ecclesiastes* (P&R)

Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from Ecclesiastes: Foundations for Expository Sermons*

Peter J. Leithart, *Shining Glory: Theological Reflections on Terence Malick's Tree of Life*

Articles

C. Bartholomew, 'Qoheleth in the Canon?! Current Trends in the Interpretation of Ecclesiastes', *Themelios* 24.3 (May 1999), 4-20

M. Tinker, 'Evil, Evangelism and Ecclesiastes', *Themelios* 28.2 (Spring 1999), 4-15

VI. Course Instructor

David Gibson (Ph.D., University of Aberdeen) is the Minister of Trinity Church in Aberdeen, Scotland. His doctoral work examined the reception of biblical texts on the doctrine of election in the Reformed tradition and is published as *Reading the Decree: Exegesis, Election and Christology in Calvin and Barth* (T&T Clark, 2009). David & his wife Angela have four children (Archie, Ella, Sam, Lily). He is the author of *Living Life Backward; Radically Whole; The LORD of Psalm 23* (forthcoming, Crossway) and, with his brother Jonathan, is co-editing 'The Grace Project', a multi-volume series on the doctrines of grace.

**Course Objectives Related to MDiv Student Learning Outcomes
 With Mini-Justification**

Course: **Ecclesiastes (OT6370)**
 Professor: Dr. David Gibson
 Campus: Dallas
 Date: Fall 2022

| <u>MDiv Student Learning Outcomes</u> | | <u>Rubric</u> ➤ Strong ➤ Moderate ➤ Minimal ➤ None | <u>Mini-Justification</u> |
|--|---|---|---|
| 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. | Strong | Reading, class participation and research paper |
| 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.) | Moderate | Lectures and reading focus on scripture as the basis and primary resource for political reflection and judgements |
| Reformed Theology | Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards. | Moderate | Features as presupposition and parts of lectures will show how wisdom literature contributes to Reformed doctrine |
| Sanctification | Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification. | Strong | Wisdom literature will be seen as a beautiful guide to godly living |
| Desire for Worldview | Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God. | Strong | Emphasizes the holistic horizon of Scripture for all of life |
| Winsomely Reformed/ Evangelistic | 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- | Strong | Careful interaction and engagement with other views that also entails an appreciation of ethical insights. |

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| | Christians; and a truth-in-love attitude in disagreements.) | | |
| Preach | Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm. | Strong | Course requirements provide framework for preaching and assess issues that ought to be understood and addressed. |
| Worship | Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service. | Moderate | Sound understanding of biblical and theological loci encourages and promotes faithful worship |
| Shepherd | Ability to shepherd the local congregation: aiding in spiritual maturity; promoting use of gifts and callings; and encouraging a concern for non-Christians, both in America and worldwide. | Moderate | Class material and readings shape the pastoral imagination. |
| Church/World | Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues. | Minimal | Some key ideas of the public square will feature. |