

REFORMED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

ST6516 World Christianity and Perseverance

Professor Karen Ellis

B.S., M.F.A., M.A.R., PhD Candidate

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Dates:

Friday February 23, 6p-9p

Saturday February 24, 930a-430p

Friday March 22, 6p-9p

Saturday March 23, 930a-430p

Friday April 5, 6p-9p

Saturday April 6, 930a-430p

Office Hours: By appointment; feel free to contact me through your Canvas account.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is a course in applied biblical ethics focused on Christian endurance under persecution.; it serves as an introduction to the discipline of Christian Endurance studies. Students will consider theologians and practitioners from across a broad spectrum of theological traditions who have dealt extensively with the role of the Church amidst persecution, religious restrictions, and/or cultural and political anti-Christian hostility. In this broad theological and historical survey, the course remains grounded in the Covenantal story. Particular attention will be given to the relationship between epistemology and ethics, the role of the Church in context of particular societies, stealth methodologies from contemporary practitioners in restricted countries, the communion of the saints, the role of the sacraments in Christian endurance, spiritual development and weaponry, and God's historical use of secular and religious institutional corruption to purify God's people and expand His Kingdom.

COURSE GOALS

1. To equip the student to articulate and live out a biblical Theology of Endurance.
2. To enable the student to better understand: the biblical/theological mandate of world evangelization, discipleship, building missional communities/local churches that resist institutional ossification, differing global views on religious freedom, and confessional views on the relationship between church and state.
3. To introduce the student to historical personalities, major and minor, of Christian endurance.
4. To inspire a passion in the student for the transformative, life altering Biblical Gospel worth dying for, so that others may live.
6. To equip the student with practical skills and narratives that make valuing endurance an integral part of their own disciple-making process.

7. To acquaint the student with the various underground networks, resources and agencies available for continued growth and participation in current global scholarship.

FORMAT

Interactive lectures will be offered (sync and live) from professor, utilizing small group interactions, seminars, video presentations, and/or discussions.

REQUIRED READING AND MEDIA

Devotional:

1 and 2 Peter

Scholarly:

WCF XXV – *Of the Church*

WCF XXVII – *Of the Sacraments*

Bavinck, Herman. 2021. *Reformed Ethics: The Duties of the Christian Life*. Edited by John Bolt. Ada: Baker Academic. pp 238- 272 (34 pages), pp 315-414, (99 pages)

Ellul, Jacques, and Dennis Pardee. 2011. *The Meaning of the City*. pp. vii-9 (21 pages), pp 113-146 (33 pages)

Hauerwas, Stanley. 1983. *The Peaceable Kingdom: A Primer in Christian Ethics*. Notre Dame, Ind: University of Notre Dame Press. (208 pages)

Niebuhr, Reinhold, and Robert McAfee Brown. 1986. *The Essential Reinhold Niebuhr: Selected Essays and Addresses*. New Haven London: Yale University press. pp 79-119 (40 pages)

Schaff, Philip. 1988. *Church and State in the United States: The American Idea of Religious Liberty and its Practical Effects* pp 9-24, 48-83.

Walker, Andrew T. 2021. *Liberty for All*. Read Introduction, Section 1, Section 2.

Yi, Wang. 2022. Nation and Tseng, ed. *Faithful Disobedience: Writings on Church and State from a Chinese House Church Movement*. pp 1-39, 95-124, 144-167, 173-178.

Required Viewing:

Pastor Wang Yi – When to Resist, When to Submit

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q5jauHt8YFE>

Pastor Wang Yi – Church State Relations and the Westminster Confession

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=31eWtPnQ4i0>

Corrie Ten Boom – One Way Door

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i4OGeU9TVP4>

Corrie Ten Boom – Fields Under Heavenly Cultivation

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X--RkHo65wY>

ASSIGNMENTS:

There will be one midterm, online discussion in Canvas for both Sync and Live attendees, and one final writing project in this course. In each assignment, the student is expected to show (1) significant Scriptural and theological reflection (2) integration of lecture and discussion material and (3) critical thinking, personal reflection, and conclusions.

MIDTERM: Your midterm will involve memorization and reflection on WCF XXV – *Of the Church* and WCF XXVII – *Of the Sacraments*. Date TBD.

ONLINE DISCUSSIONS: All students are expected to complete discussion questions that engage with course reading. These will be posted on Canvas for short form interaction.

FINAL PAPER: The student will choose one topical cultural, political, or social challenge to biblical authority, the presence of the church, the roles/relationship of church and state, or religious freedom from within the Western context (US, Canada, Europe). The student will execute thoughtful reflection on the Cain and Abel dynamic, the Ancient Story, and interaction with the principles covered in lectures and the reading, drawing conclusions and making recommendations for any local church expression that may be involved.

- **Due Date:** TBD, typically two weeks after the final class.

FORMAT FOR ALL PAPERS

- A successful paper will include the following:
 - Your *introduction* should state your topic *up front* (ie what you will cover), and why it relevant to this course. (25%)
 - The *body* of your paper should interact with *at least three theologians covered in class*. (25%)
 - The *body of your paper should* thoughtful reflection on the Cain and Abel dynamic, the Ancient story, and interaction with the principles covered in lectures and the reading, drawing conclusions and making recommendations for the whatever local church expression may be involved. (25%)
 - Finally, a clear *conclusion* (at least one page if not more), that ties together the ideas presented in the body of your paper. Your conclusion should be a thoughtful summation of the ideas you've presented. (25%)
 - Papers should be uploaded in Microsoft Word format to Canvas, no later than two weeks after the final class date listed.
- Formatting:
 - Paper length should be at least 15 pages, not to exceed 20 pages. This page count does *not* include your bibliography, which should be included at the end).
 - References should be formatted according to Turabian/U of Chicago. For Bible references, consult 17.8.2 in Turabian for formatting.
 - Your research paper should be double spaced, in 12 pt. Times New Roman font, with standard 1" margins all around. Do not include a cover page.
 - Remember to place your name in the saved file, as well as on the paper itself under your title.
 - Upload your paper to the professor via Canvas.

HONOUR

Students are expected to research and compose their own original writing in course papers and to adhere to biblical standards of honor and integrity. The use of AI writing programs is a violation of academic standards and Godly character. Detection of their use will result in a failing grade.

FINAL EXAM

There is no final for this course. Your final paper serves as the final exam for this course, and is worth 40% of our grade.

ATTENDANCE

Classroom attendance (both Sync and Live) is for the glory of God and preparation for the gospel ministry. Students therefore are expected to attend class sessions. Excessive unexcused absences will affect the final grade. Consult the RTS Catalogue for further details.

GRADING

ST6516 Grading Matrix	
Midterm	30%
Online Discussion	30%
Final Paper	40%
TOTAL	100%

I. STUDENT ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

ASSIGNMENT	PERCENT OF GRADE	DUE DATE
Proctored Midterm (Memorization)	30%	via Canvas
Documented Discussion/Engagement	30%	As per Schedule
Final Paper	40%	As per Schedule

Note: All assignments must be submitted by the due date listed in the syllabus and no later than the final due date for the course listed in this syllabus by permission of the instructor. After the final due date, faculty cannot grant students permission to submit late work. See “Completion of Course Work” below.

II. GRADE SCALE

97-100 A	86-87 B-	75-77 D+
94-96 A-	83-85 C+	72-74 D
91-93 B+	80-82 C	70-71 D-
88-90 B	78-79 C	00-70 F

Course Objectives Related to MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes

Course: ST6516 Worldview and Christian Perseverance

Professor: K.A. Ellis

Campus: Atlanta/Sync

<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	Applying framework of creation, fall, redemption, glorification to international injustices; assessing global human rights through that framework in a long-form 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	Students are encouraged to incorporate Scripture and a biblical worldview in their research paper.
Reformed Theology	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	➤ Strong	The student will consider human dignity through the lens of creation, abuses through the lens of original sin/depravity, and the impact of the fall on man's inhumanity to man.
Sanctification	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	➤ Moderate	Patience in engaging other members of the class in discussion groups; yielding, disagreeing, agreeing.
Desire for Worldview	Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.	➤ Moderate	Assessing strengths and deficiencies in the historical application of the truths that were assumed to be "self-evident" In light of the Word of God.
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.)	➤ Moderate	Patience in engaging other members of the class in discussion groups; yielding, disagreeing, agreeing.
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	All have received human rights from God; student will test to what extent those rights should be granted, and how they should be expressed to all global citizens.

Date: 1 December 2023

Zoom Policy

Your professor may allow you to Zoom into class or watch Zoom recordings for excused absences based on the professor's discretion and subject to the availability of equipment. Students should contact their professor well in advance of the class meeting. For a third absence the Registrar should be consulted. Your professor may require additional interactive assignments to offset the absence of classroom interaction. Sync or Remote Live courses have priority for the limited Zoom equipment.

Extension Policy

All assignments and exams are to be completed by the deadlines announced in this syllabus or in class.

Extensions for assignments and exams due within the normal duration of the course must be approved beforehand by the Professor. Extensions of two weeks or less beyond the date of the last deadline for the course must be approved beforehand by the Professor. A grade penalty may be assessed.

Extensions of greater than two weeks but not more than six weeks beyond the last deadline for the course may be granted in extenuating circumstances (i.e. illness, family emergency). For an extension of more than two weeks the student must request an Extension Request Form from the Registrar's Office. The request must be approved by the Professor and the Academic Dean. A grade penalty may be assessed. (RTS Catalog p. 46 and RTS Atlanta Student Handbook p. 18)

Any incompletes not cleared six weeks after the last published due date for course work will be converted to a failing grade. Professors may have the failing grade changed to a passing grade by request. (RTS Catalog p. 49)