

ST5200 -- Christology, Soteriology, Eschatology  
Reformed Theological Seminary  
Orlando, FL  
Spring 2026

Instructor: Justin S. Holcomb  
Email: jholcomb@rts.edu  
Office Hours: By appointment

## Course Description

This course explores the doctrines of Scripture from a systematic perspective. Topics include Christology, Soteriology, and Eschatology.

## Course Objectives

### *Comprehension*

- To increase your knowledge of Christology, the doctrine of Christ's person
- To increase your knowledge of Soteriology, the doctrine of Christ's work for us
- To increase your knowledge of Eschatology, the doctrine of our hope in the gospel

### *Competence*

- To sharpen your ability to read, think, and write about systematic theology with clarity and perception
- To sharpen your ability to think synthetically about how various theological topics relate to one another

### *Character*

- To grow in your faith, better appreciating the glory of the gospel
- To grow in your hope, more perceptively longing for the return of Christ
- To grow in your love, reflecting the generosity of God back to others

## Course Reading

Michael Allen and Scott R. Swain, eds., *Christian Dogmatics: Reformed Theology for the Church Catholic* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2016). ISBN 9780801048944.

Cyril of Alexandria, *On the Unity of Christ* (Popular Patristics Series 13; Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1995), pages 49-133. ISBN 9780881411331.

Robert Sherman, *King, Priest, and Prophet: A Trinitarian Theology of Atonement* (Theology for the Twenty-First Century; London: T & T Clark, 2004). ISBN 9780567025609.

Note: while this paperback book is quite expensive new (even through Amazon), you can find lots of very inexpensive used options (in the Amazon marketplace) as well as a much more reasonable version on Logos Bible Software.

B.B. Warfield, “Emotional Life of Our Lord” (provided electronically)

John Calvin, *Institutes*, Book II.6, 9-12, 14-16 (provided electronically)

John Calvin, *Institutes*, Book II.15-17 (provided electronically)

John Calvin, *Institutes*, Book III.1-3 and 11 (provided electronically)

John Calvin, *Institutes*, Book III.25 (provided electronically)

Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, pp. 695-737 (provided electronically)

G. K. Beale, “The Eschatological Conception of New Testament Theology” (provided electronically)

Herman Ridderbos, “The Structure of Paul’s Theology” (provided electronically)

Herman Ridderbos, “Indicative and Imperative” (provided electronically)

Michael Allen, “Place of Justification” and “Justification and Participation” (provided electronically)

John Webster, “The Holiness of the Christian” (provided electronically)

Justin S. Holcomb, “The Need for a New Adam” (provided electronically)

## **Course Assignments**

The student is required to complete the following three assignments in whole:

### *(1) Reading*

Reading must be completed before each class meets. Many class discussions will focus on readings, so you must be prepared to talk.

### *(2) Reading Briefs*

Students are expected to prepare a brief on the assigned reading for each week. The purpose of the brief is to summarize the thesis, outline, and argument of the assigned readings, as well as to state one’s own analysis of it (in the form of questions, confirmations, objections, etc.). Briefs may include quotations from various points in the readings (so long as page numbers are referenced).

Briefs should be no more than 350 words. Briefs cover all the readings for each week. Do NOT write a brief for each chapter or article in a given week but all of the readings together.

See the “How to Write a Brief” and “Example of a Brief” in Courses Resources folder of the Canvas page for this course.

### *(3) Final Research Paper*

Students will write a research paper on one topic discussed in class readings or lectures. The student will demonstrate familiarity with major literature and will show competence in dealing fairly with that material. We will discuss the paper in class. The last class before it is due will be spent in significant group discussion of your research and outlining. The paper should be 2000-2500 words.

Final papers are due on May 8, 2019 by 11:00 a.m.

### **Grading and Academic Standards**

Grades are apportioned as follows:

Reading and Reading Briefs	50%
Final Paper	50%

Grades may be adjusted based on issues regarding attendance and participation in class. Class attendance and participation are a central part of this course. If you should miss a class, you are expected to contact another student regarding the information covered.

Late assignments will be graded down 33% for each 24 hours late.

Do not submit a paper that you submitted for another course. This will result in a grade of 0 for that assignment.

All written assignments should be submitted in Word format. Assignments should be double-spaced with 1” margins on all sides and formatted in Times New Roman 12-point type. Assignments must be submitted electronically.

### **Course Schedule**

#### Week 1

Introduction to course

Titles of Jesus Christ

Christ and Salvation in church history

The Covenant of Redemption

Read—CD, ch. 5 (“The Covenant of Redemption”)

Week 2

The Covenant of Grace

Read—Calvin, *Institutes*, bk. 2, chs. 10-11 (provided electronically)

Week 3

Person of Christ

Read—B.B. Warfield, “Emotional Life of Our Lord”

Read—John Calvin, *Institutes*, Book II.6, 9-12, 14-16 (person of Christ)

The Incarnation: Creed, Councils, and Controversies

Read—Cyril, *On the Unity of Christ*

Week 4

The Incarnation

Read—CD, ch. 10 (“Incarnation”)

Week 5

Humiliation and Exaltation

Read—Sherman, chs. 2-5

Week 6

Work of Christ

Read—John Calvin, *Institutes*, Book II.15-17 (work of Christ)

Salvation

Read—John Calvin, *Institutes*, Book III.1-3 and 11 (salvation)

Views of Atonement

Election: Grace and Human Nature

Week 7

**Spring Break—No Class**

Week 8

The Advent of the King

Read—G. K. Beale, “The Eschatological Conception of New Testament Theology” (provided electronically)

Read—Herman Ridderbos, “The Structure of Paul’s Theology” (provided electronically)

Work of Christ

Read *CD*, ch. 11 (“The Work of Christ Accomplished”)

Week 9

Regeneration

Justification

Read *CD*, ch. 12 (“The Work of Christ Applied”)

Week 10

Justification

Read Allen, “Place of Justification” and “Justification and Participation” (provided electronically)

Week 11

Faith and Works

Read—James 2, Romans 4, Gen 15, and Gen 22

Sanctification

Read—Sherman, chs. 6-7

Read—John Webster, “The Holiness of the Christian” (provided electronically)

Week 12

Eschatology

Read—John Calvin, *Institutes*, Book III.25 (eschatology) (21 pages)

Read—Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, pp. 695-737

Major Events Preceding the Second Coming

Read—Daniel 9

Read—Matthew 24

Week 13

The Return of Christ

Read—*CD*, ch. 16 (“Kingdom of God”)

Week 14

Review & Final Papers

### Course Objectives Related to MDiv\* Student Learning Outcomes

Course: 02ST517

Professor: Justin Holcomb

Campus: Orlando

Date: Winter 2019

<b><u>MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes</u></b> <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> <i>*As the MDiv is the core degree at RTS, the MDiv rubric will be used in this syllabus.</i>		<b><u>Rubric</u></b> ➤ Strong ➤ Moderate ➤ Minimal ➤ None	<b><u>Mini-Justification</u></b>
<b>Articulation (oral &amp; written)</b>	Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, and cultural/global information, including details, concepts, and frameworks.	Strong	Weekly writing requirements develop ability to gather appropriate content and communicate it in a clear and compelling manner.
<b>Scripture</b>	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	Focuses on broad, canonical teaching of Holy Scripture upon certain fundamental doctrinal topics, as they develop exegetically.
<b>Reformed Theology</b>	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Strong	Topics of Christology, Soteriology, and Eschatology introduced as taught in Reformed tradition. Analysis of relevant WCF chapters.
<b>Sanctification</b>	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Minimal	Direct study of sanctification in residential week, focusing on Christ's agency in maturing Christians in the present tense.
<b>Desire for Worldview</b>	Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.	Strong	Develops systematic and coherent framework for interpreting all of life in a biblical, Reformed manner.
<b>Winsomely Reformed</b>	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	Introduces many classical precursors to Reformed theology, noting the way in which the Reformation was a modification or renewal movement within classical Christianity rather than its repudiation or replacement, as well as contributions made by later traditions other than the Reformed.
<b>Preach</b>	Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.	Minimal	Macro-understanding of whole counsel of God developed so exposition of any text can be done with a greater sense of breadth, emphasis, and proportion.
<b>Worship</b>	Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service.	Minimal	Macro-understanding of whole counsel of God developed so development of liturgy (whether fixed or free) can be done with a greater sense of breadth, emphasis, and

			proportion.
<b>Shepherd</b>	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.	Minimal	Focus upon application of salvation enables student to consider regular means of grace and normal course of Christian discipleship in light of the gospel promises.
<b>Church/World</b>	Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.	Minimal	Macro-understanding of whole counsel of God provides a framework for viewing key cultural issues in a theological lens.