

## ST5150 Scripture, Theology, Anthropology Fall 2026 (v. 042426)

J. V. Fesko

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Class Meeting Day and Time: Tuesdays, 8a-11a

Room: TBD

### Course Description

This course will systematically present biblical teaching on the topics of Scripture (prolegomena), Theology proper (doctrine of God), and Anthropology (doctrine of man) as understood and taught within the Reformed tradition. We will also talk about the place of systematic theology in the Christian life and why it is critical for pastors to think and write well. Consequently, we will focus on understanding and articulating sound theology. While the course is academic by nature. It is also designed to be doxological (inspiring us to worship) and practical (helping us in real life ministry).

### Electronics

Computers, laptops, smart phones, and recording devices are not allowed in class. Students may use “dumb tablets,” such as Kindle Scribes, reMarkables, or Booxs. Failure to follow this policy will result in points deducted from the participation grade.

### Required Texts

Books

*Holy Bible* (any version)

*Westminster Standards* (any modern version – post-1788 American revisions), preferably with Scripture proofs. WCF = Westminster Confession of Faith; WLC = Westminster Larger Catechism; WSC = Westminster Shorter Catechism

### Required Texts

Michael Allen and Scott R. Swain, ed., *Christian Dogmatics: Reformed Theology for the Church Catholic* (Baker Academic, 2016). ISBN 13: 9780801048944

Herman Bavinck, *Guidebook for Instruction in the Christian Religion*, translated and edited by Gregory Parker and Cameron Clausing (Hendrickson, 2022). ISBN 13: 9781683072997

J. Budziszewski, *On the Meaning of Sex* (Intercollegiate Studies, 2014). ISBN 13: 9781610170994

James Dolezal, *All That is in God: Evangelical Theology and the Challenge of Classical Theism*. (Reformed Heritage Books, 2017) ISBN 13: 978-1601785541

Gilles Emery, *The Trinity: An Introduction to Catholic Doctrine on the Triune God* (Catholic University of America Press, 2011). ISBN 13: 9780813218649

John Murray, *The Imputation of Adam's Sin* (P & R, 1977). ISBN 13: 9780875523415

Timothy Ward, *Words of Life: Scripture as the Living and Active Word of God* (IVP Academic, 2009). ISBN 13: 9780830827442

On Canvas

J. Patout Burns, *Theological Anthropology* (Sources of Early Christian Thought) (Fortress Press, 1981). Includes: Pelagius, Letter to Demetrius & Augustine, Grace of Christ.

Scott Swain, "Thoughts on Theological Anthropology: Man as Male and Female," in *Reformed Faith and Practice* 5/1 (May 2020): 54-65.

Course Assignments

**Reading (15%):** completion of all assigned reading. Please report your percentage for completed readings via CANVAS.

**Participation (15%):** attend and actively participate in lectures and class discussions. Unexcused absences result in a five-point deduction for your participation grade. Being late to class results in a three-point deduction per incident. More than three unexcused absences results in an F for participation. Excused absences are those that are cleared with the professor ahead of time due to illness or extenuating circumstances. Note the following grading rubric:

A (100-94)	B (93-86)	C (85-78)	D (78-70)	F (69 – 0)
Asked clear and cogent questions; was respectful of others. Attended class. Participated in discussions. Did not misuse technology.	Participated in discussions; shared questions and comments. Was respectful of others. Was late to class.	Listened mainly; occasionally asked a question or offered a comment. Was respectful of others. Misused technology. Was late to class.	Questions or comments were off topic. Was disrespectful of others. Or, dominated class time by not permitting others to ask their questions. Misused technology. Was late to class.	Failed to attend class—missed more than three lecture periods total without an excused absence.

**Research Paper (35%):** you must write a 12-15 page research paper written in a 12 point Times New Roman font, with 10 point Times New Roman footnotes, double-spaced, footnotes single-spaced. Place your name at the top of the first page (no title page required) and no bibliography needed. Please use *The Chicago Manual of Style* or *Turabian's Manual for Writers of Term Papers* for a style guide. **Your paper is due on November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2026.** You must also include the following in your paper to avoid the following automatic point deductions:

- Abstract (5 pts) – state the argument of your paper in approximately 100 words
- Thesis (5 pts) – ensure your paper has a clear thesis statement
- Three steps (5 pts) – ensure your paper states the three steps of your argument, i.e., how you will prove your thesis

- Ten sources (7 pts) – you must have ten academic sources (Bibles, confessions, web sites, blogs, newspaper articles, music are not academic sources but may be used)
- Three journal articles (7 pts) – you must use three academic journal articles from reputable academic journals
- Length (7 pts) – ensure your paper is 12-15 pages
- Style guide check (5 pts) – ensure your footnotes are in proper form.
- Biblical languages (5 pts) – make sure you appeal to the biblical languages in your paper (Greek and Hebrew fonts are not required but encouraged)
- Late submission (7 pts per calendar day) – submit your paper on time by the deadline to avoid this penalty

A (100-94)	B (93-86)	C (85-78)	D (77-70)	F (69-0)
Follows assignment rules re. format, length, and sources; engages primary sources; provides analysis, not simply rehearses information.	Follows assignment rules re. format, length, and sources; engages minimal primary sources and is more reliant upon secondary sources; has more repetition of information than analysis	Fails to meet assignment rules re. format, length, and sources; does not engage primary sources; relies upon secondary sources exclusively; has minimal analysis.	Fails to meet assignment rules re. format, length, and sources; relies upon secondary sources exclusively, and has no analysis.	Fails to submit paper or significantly fails to meet assignment rules.

**Final Exam (35%):** Students will sit for a two-hour exam that covers questions drawn from lectures and assigned readings.

### Lecture Schedule

Date	Topic	Readings
Aug 26	What is Theology	Swain and Allen, 1-29; Bavinck, 1-12
Sep 02	Revelation and Scripture	Swain and Allen, 30-56; Bavinck, 19-50; WCF 1; WLC qq. 2-6; WSC qq. 2-3
Sep 09	Revelation and Scripture	Ward, all
Sep 16	Divine Perfections	Swain and Allen, 57-77; Bavinck, 51-59; WLC q. 7; WSC q. 4
Sep 23	Divine Perfections	Dolezal, all
Sep 30	Trinity	Swain and Allen, 78-106; Bavinck, 60-79; WCF 2
Oct 07	<b>READING WEEK</b>	
Oct 14	Trinity	Emery, all; WLC qq. 8-11; WSC qq. 5-6
Oct 21	Decrees	WCF 3; WLC 12-14; WSC qq. 7-8

# REFORMED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

SYSTEM

<b>Oct 28</b>	Creation	Swain and Allen, 126-47; Bavinck, 70-80; WCF 4; WLC qq. 15-16; WSC q. 9
<b>Nov 04</b>	Creation Humans	Swain and Allen, 165-93; Bavinck, 81-85; Budziszewski, all; Burns, all; Swain, "Theological Anthropology"; WLC q. 17; WSC q. 10 <b>Papers Due</b>
<b>Nov 11</b>	Providence	Swain and Allen, 148-66; WCF 5; WLC qq. 18-20; WSC q. 11-12
<b>Nov 17</b>	<b>NO CLASS</b>	
<b>Nov 25</b>	Covenant of Works	WCF 7; WLC qq. 21-22
<b>Dec 02</b>	Sin	Swain and Allen, 194-215; Murray, all; Bavinck, 86-94; WCF 6; WLC aa. 21-30; WSC qq. 21-20

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

Course: ST5150 Scripture, Theology, Anthropology

Professor: J. V. Fesko

Campus: Jackson, MS

Date: Fall 2026

<b><u>MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes</u></b>		<b><u>Rubric</u></b>	<b><u>Mini-Justification</u></b>
<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"> <li>• Strong</li> <li>• Moderate</li> <li>• Minimal</li> <li>• None</li> </ul>	
<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. Also includes ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.	STRONG	Students are required to participate in discussions as well as write a research paper.
<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	Scriptural knowledge is necessary and students are expected to include original-language exegesis in their papers.
<b>Reformed Theology</b>	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	STRONG	This course examines the big picture of Reformed theology and explores its key doctrines.
<b>Sanctification</b>	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	STRONG	A key point of this course is that theology is ultimately about knowing and loving God.
<b>Worldview</b>	Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God. Includes ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.	STRONG	A correlative point of this course is to be conformed to Christ's image as we live in the fallen world.
<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	If we truly know who God is, then humility is vital for the Christian minister.
<b>Pastoral Ministry</b>	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-Christians.	MODERATE	This course does not focus on the exercise of the practical elements of ministry but it does lay the foundation for them.