

Introduction to Biblical Theology

Reformed Theological Seminary Atlanta: Nashville Extension Site
ON6200 | 2 hours

Fall 2026: August 20–November 19 (Fall Break: Oct. 15) | 13 meetings
Thursdays, 9:00–11:00 a.m.
Covenant Presbyterian Church, Room 205

Professor: Rev. Dr. Morgan Johnson
Email: morganj@covenantpres.com, mkjjohnson@rts.edu
Office Hours: by appointment

Course Description

"This course investigates the covenantal nature of the Christian Bible from a biblical-theological perspective. The study of biblical theology includes: (1) the history, definition, task, method, and goal of biblical theology; (2) the attempt to identify the "center" of biblical theology as a way of understanding the relationship of the various parts to the whole; and (3) selected themes in biblical theology as those threads that make up the fabric of the biblical canon." (*RTS Catalog*)

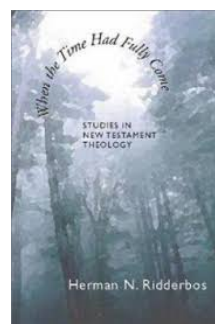
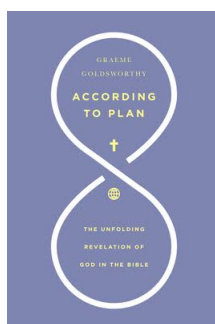
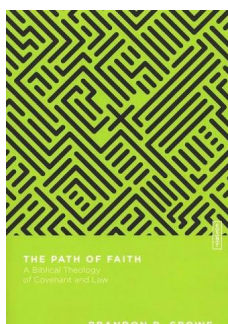
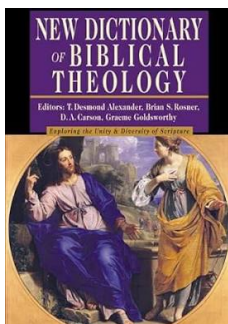
Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

- understand the basic nature of biblical theology
- understand various approaches to biblical theology
- gain a broad awareness of the redemptive-historical storyline of Scripture and how that story unfolds through Scripture's various books and genres
- understand the importance of biblical theology for interpreting, summarizing, teaching/preaching, and applying God's Word
- be able to trace and articulate some of the central themes of Scripture

Required Texts

1. T. D. Alexander and Brian Rosner eds., *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology: Exploring the Unity and Diversity of Scripture* (IVP Academic, 2000)
2. Brandon Crowe, *The Path of Faith: A Biblical Theology of Covenant and Law* (IVP Academic, 2021)
3. Graeme Goldsworthy, *According to Plan: The Unfolding Revelation of God in the Bible* (IVP Academic, 2002)
4. Herman Ridderbos, *When the Time Had Fully Come: Studies in New Testament Theology* (see Canvas for links to online versions)



Lectures/Discussions

- 1) Introduction & Methodology
 - 2) Storyline: Genesis
 - 3) Storyline: Exodus–Deuteronomy
 - 4) Storyline: Joshua–Esther
 - 5) Storyline: Job–Song of Solomon
 - 6) Storyline: Isaiah–Malachi
 - 7) Storyline: Gospels & Acts
 - 8) Storyline: Romans–Revelation
 - 9) Themes: Creation, Spirit, & Temple
 - 10) Themes: Kingdom, Covenant, & Church
 - 11) Themes: Atonement & Salvation through Judgment
 - 12) Themes: Law, Obedience, Good Works
 - 13) Conclusion & Presentations
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Grades & Assessments

1. Reading & Discussion (25%)

- Each student is expected to read the required reading and participate in class by being prepared to discuss the reading.

2. Biblical Book Summaries (30%)

- For all sixty-six books of the Bible, write a four-sentence summary (this is also an exercise in brevity) of each biblical book that includes one sentence for each of the following four components:
 1. Summary: Summarize the individual book.
 2. Storyline: Describe how the book contributes to the overarching storyline of Scripture.
 3. Christ: How would you proclaim the good news of Christ from a specific passage in this book?
 4. Application: Give one application based on the overall message of the book. What is one way this book shapes the Christian life?

3. Research Paper or Teaching Project (45%)

- Each student will choose to do either a research paper or a teaching project. See below.

Option # 1: Research Paper

- Write a 3,000-word (word count does not include footnotes) academic research paper that traces a specific biblical-theological theme across Scripture. You must choose one of the topics listed below. The paper should include some exegesis of individual passages, but it should primarily seek to show the development of a theme across God's unfolding self-revelation in Scripture and how that theme anticipates and is fulfilled by Christ. Finally, the paper must give one implication of that theme for a practical area such as worldview, systematic theology, evangelism, discipleship, spiritual formation, etc.
- In your paper, you must include the following:

- A clear and discernable thesis statement: “In this paper, I will argue...”
- A clear methodology statement: “The way I will argue for this thesis is by...”
- A brief survey of the scholarship on your chosen topic
- Interaction with at least 15 academic/scholarly resources (e.g., books, commentaries, journal articles, dictionaries)
- Exegesis of 2–3 key biblical passages
- Development of the theme across God’s self-revelation in Scripture
- Demonstration of how that theme anticipates and is fulfilled by Christ
- One practical implication of that theme for worldview, systematic theology, ministry, spiritual formation, etc.
- The research paper will consist of four successive assignments.
 1. On Week 2, each student must submit his/her topic from one of the approved topics listed below.
 2. On Week 5, each student must submit a preliminary bibliography of at least 10 sources which he/she plans to consult in the research phase.
 3. On the final class, each student must submit the final draft of his/her research paper.
 4. On the final class meeting, each student will present a 3-minute summary of his/her paper in front of class and take questions from the class for 3 minutes.
- Research Paper Topics

○ Creation	○ Exile
○ Covenant	○ Salvation through Judgment
○ Kingdom	○ Spirit
○ Temple	○ Law
○ Messiah	○ Wisdom
○ The People of God	○ Holiness and/or Wholeness
○ The Mission of God’s People	○ Blessedness/Flourishing
○ The Image of God	○ Death
○ Man & Woman	○ Life
○ Sin & Idolatry	

Option #2: Teaching Project

- Write a 10-week teaching series related to biblical theology. You can either give a big picture overview of the storyline of Scripture or trace a few of Scripture’s central themes from the above list of themes. For each of the 10 lessons, you will give a substantial teaching outline of your main points and subpoints, including illustrations, discussion questions, and applications. Each lesson outline must be around 500 words. Thus, the entire 10-week teaching project should be close to 5,000 words. You are not required to write out a full manuscript of every word you intend to say, but you must provide at least a summary of what you will say under each point. In other words, a simple, Roman-numeral or bullet point outline will not suffice. Also, you must consult at least 10 resources and include a bibliography. I want you to think carefully about what you would say and give evidence of this reflection. The amount of care and thought evidenced in the work will determine your grade.
- You should also indicate in the introduction what the anticipated audience and setting for this project would be (e.g., a campus ministry, a small group with

couples, a men's/women's Bible study, a Sunday School class for high school students, etc.). Your outline, discussion questions, and especially applications should be tailored to your anticipated audience.

- Your project must include the following:
 - A clear and discernable main idea: "In this study, we will look at..."
 - A clear table of contents for the whole teaching series
 - Interaction with at least 10 resources (e.g., books, commentaries, articles)
 - Development of the whole storyline of the Bible or development of a few themes across God's self-revelation in Scripture
 - Use of Scripture in each lesson
 - Demonstration of how the storyline of Scripture or collection of themes anticipates and is fulfilled by Christ
 - Illustrations, discussion questions, applications
- The teaching project will consist of four successive assignments.
 1. On Week 2, each student must submit his/her topic(s) for the project.
 2. On Week 5, each student must submit a preliminary bibliography of at least 5 sources which he/she plans to consult in the preparation phase.
 3. On the final class, each student must submit the final draft of his/her teaching project.
 4. On the final class meeting, each student will present a 3-minute summary of his/her project in front of the class and take questions from the class for 3-minute.

Schedule

Abbreviations

Crowe	Brandon Crowe, <i>The Path of Faith</i>
Goldsworthy	Graeme Goldsworthy, <i>According to Plan</i>
NDBT	<i>New Dictionary of Biblical Theology</i>
Ridderbos	Herman Ridderbos, <i>When the Time Had Fully Come</i>

Date	Week	To Read Before Class	Lecture/Discussion	Due
8/20	1.	• Matthew 1–2; Luke 24 • Goldsworthy, Ch. 1–7 • Craig Bartholomew and Michael Goheen, "Prologue: The Bible as a Grand Story," in <i>The Drama of Scripture</i> (online) • NDBT ○ "Biblical theology" ○ "Scripture" ○ "Biblical history" ○ "Exegesis and hermeneutics" ○ "Relationship of Old Testament and New Testament" ○ Preaching and biblical theology"	Introduction & Methodology	

8/27	2.	• Genesis 1–22 • <i>NDBT</i> ◦ “Genesis to Kings” ◦ “Genesis” • Goldsworthy, Ch. 8–12 • Crowe, Intro–Ch. 2	Storyline: Genesis	• Summary of Genesis • Topics for Paper/Project
9/3	3.	• Exodus 1–14; 19–24; Deuteronomy 1–6 • <i>NDBT</i>, “Exodus”–“Deuteronomy” • Goldsworthy, Ch. 13–15 • Crowe, Ch. 3	Storyline: Exodus–Deuteronomy	Summaries of Exodus–Deuteronomy (4 books)
9/10	4.	• Joshua 1; Judges 1–2; Ruth 4; 2 Samuel 7; 2 Chronicles 36 • <i>NDBT</i>, “Judges”–“Esther” • Goldsworthy, Ch. 16–19 • Crowe, Ch. 4	Storyline: Joshua–Esther	Summaries of Joshua–Esther (12 books)
9/17	5.	• Proverbs 1–7; Ecclesiastes • <i>NDBT</i>, “Wisdom Books”; “Job”–“Song of Solomon” • Goldsworthy, “Wisdom and Its Literature in Biblical-Theological Context” (online)	Storyline: Job–Song of Solomon	• Summaries of Job–Song of Solomon (5 books) • Preliminary Bibliography for Paper/Project
9/24	6.	• Isaiah 1–2; 52–55; Micah 1–7; Hosea 1–3 • <i>NDBT</i>, “Prophetic Books”; “Isaiah”; “Jeremiah”; “Ezekiel”; “Daniel” “Hosea”; “Micah” • Goldsworthy, Ch. 20–21 • Crowe, Ch. 5	Storyline: Isaiah–Malachi	Summaries of Isaiah–Malachi (17 books)
10/1	7.	• Matthew 1–4; John 1–2; Luke 23–24; Acts 1, 7 • <i>NDBT</i>, “New Testament Use of the Old Testament”; “Synoptic Gospels”; “Luke–Acts”; “Matthew”; “John” • Goldsworthy, Ch. 22–23 • Crowe, Ch. 6–7	Storyline: Gospels & Acts	Summaries of Gospels–Acts (5 books)
10/8	8.	• Romans, Galatians, Hebrews, 1 Peter, Revelation 1–5, 20–22 • Goldsworthy, Ch. 24–25 • <i>NDBT</i>, “Paul”; “Romans”; “Galatians”; “Hebrews”; “1 Peter”; “Revelation” • Ridderbos, Ch. 3 (p. 44–60) • Crowe, Ch. 8–Conclusion	Storyline: Romans–Revelation	Summaries of Romans–Revelation (22 books)
10/15		FALL BREAK: NO CLASS		

10/22	9.	• Genesis 1–2, 6–9; Exodus 40; 1 Kings 5–7; Matthew 3; John 2, 14–16; Galatians 5; Revelation 21 • <i>NDBT</i>, “God”; “Creation,” “Spirit,” “Temple”	Themes: Creation, Spirit, & Temple	
10/29	10.	• Genesis 1, 12, 15, 17; Matthew 13, 16, 18; Ephesians 3; 1 Peter 2 • <i>NDBT</i>, “Kingdom,” “Covenant,” “Church” • Ridderbos, Ch. 1 (p. 9–25)	Themes: Kingdom, Covenant, & Church	
11/5	11.	• Exodus 11–12; Leviticus 16; Isaiah 53; Luke 22; Romans 3 • <i>NDBT</i>, “Sacrifice,” “Atonement”; “Judgment” • James Hamilton, “The Glory of God in Salvation through Judgment: The Centre of Biblical Theology?” (online)	Themes: Atonement & Salvation through Judgment	
11/12	12.	• Exodus 20; Leviticus 19; Psalm 1; Matthew 5–7; Romans 6–7, 12–14; James; 1 Peter 1; 2 Peter 1 • <i>NDBT</i>, “Law”; • Ridderbos, Ch. 2 (26–43), 4 (p. 61–77),	Themes: Law, Obedience, Good Works	
11/19	13.		Conclusion & Presentations	Research Paper or Teaching Project

Course Objectives Related to MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes

Course: Introduction to Biblical Theology

Professor: Dr. Morgan Johnson

Campus: Atlanta, Nashville Extension

Date: Fall 2026

<u>MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes</u> <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>		<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. Also includes ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.	Strong	Students will discuss orally in class. Students will write a summary of every biblical book as well as a research paper or teaching project.
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.)	Strong	Students will read much about the meaning of Scripture. Biblical theology deals closely with hermeneutics. Students will also reflect on how to apply a biblical-theological theme to modern circumstances.
Reformed Theology	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Moderate	Students will learn about various Reformed approaches to biblical theology, including covenant theology
Sanctification	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Minimal	
Desire for Worldview	Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.	Moderate	Biblical Theology provides the true narrative which ought to shape our worldview and life-view.
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.)	Minimal	
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.	Moderate	

RTS 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.

RTS 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)

RTS Artificial Intelligence Policy

Gathering research leads: AI-enabled tools *may* be employed in a manner similar to using Wikipedia, blogs, social media, or other online sources in generating basic raw material (e.g., "What verses in the Old Testament use the word 'covenant'?") or leads for further reading (e.g., "What recent books deal with the topic of divine simplicity?"). Such uses *do not generally have to be disclosed*, but the student is encouraged to consult with the professor of record if there are any questions or doubts. Note: even the best AI tool is not infallible and often generates junk data; the student is, therefore, fully responsible for vetting the accuracy or validity of any such information generated.

Proofreading: AI writing assistants (e.g., Grammarly) *may* be used for standard help with basic spellchecking and grammatical proofreading; such uses *do not have to be disclosed*. However, AI *may not* be used to *fully rewrite* sentences or paragraphs.

Creative process and textual composition: All writing in every course assignment must be, for all intents and purposes, the original work of the student. Thus, AI *may not* be used to generate key components of a writing project that are aimed at cultivating certain competencies in the student, such as thesis/topic sentences, outlines, critical engagement with other views, and so forth. In addition, AI *may not* be used to write full sentences or paragraphs.