

ST 3, The Doctrines of
Soteriology and Eschatology



Reformed Theological Seminary
Atlanta

4ST520 (3 Credits)¹

Summer 2010

Monday 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM, Tuesday 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM, Wednesday
8:30 AM - 4:30 PM, (no class Thursday), Friday and Sat 8:30 AM -
4:30 PM, June 21 - June 26

Dr. Howard Griffith

Assistant Professor of Systematic Theology

hgriffith@rts.edu

703-448-3393

Office Hours: call me - 703-408-3157.

Course Description:

We will study how we come to salvation in Christ and what that salvation brings us in Christ.

Goals

1. To increase understanding and confidence in historic Christian doctrine.
2. To present God's eschatological work of saving sinners, and ways of speaking about his salvation consistent with Scripture.
3. To elicit a greater love for our Triune God and his revelation.

Texts

Herman Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics*, Volumes 3 and 4 (HB 3 and HB 4).

¹ Taking the systematic theology courses in sequence—though not required—will increase your ability in theology. However, first-time students may like to look at S. Grenz, *Pocket Dictionary of Theological Terms*, and J. van Genderen and W.H. Velema, *Concise Reformed Dogmatics*. They are not assigned, but “ConRefDog” is quite compatible with Bavinck.

Richard B. Gaffin, *By Faith, Not By Sight: Paul and the Order of Salvation* (Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 2006).

Richard B. Gaffin, "Theonomy and Eschatology: Reflections on Postmillennialism" at <http://newhopefairfax.org/files/Gaffin%20Theonomy%20and%20Eschatology.pdf>.

Howard Griffith, "'The First Title of the Spirit': Adoption in Calvin's Soteriology" <http://www.togetherforadoption.org/wp-content/media/the-first-title-of-the-spirit-by-dr-howard-griffith.pdf>.

"The Report on Justification Presented to the Seventy-third General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church," <http://www.opc.org/GA/justification.pdf>.

Bruce K. Waltke, "Kingdom Promises as Spiritual" in J. Feinberg, ed., *Continuity and Discontinuity: Essays in Honor of S. Lewis Johnson* (Westchester, Ill: Crossway, 1988), on course homepage.

The *Westminster Confession of Faith* (WC) and the *Westminster Shorter Catechism* (SC).

N. T. Wright, *Justification: God's Plan and Paul's Vision* (SPCK, 2009).

Assignments

1. Class attendance is required. I will call the roll, and absence will be penalized—one absence will cost a letter grade, etc.²
2. Please complete as much of the reading as possible before the class meets. The more you do ahead, the better you will grasp the material. Completed reading will be worth 10% of your final grade. I will ask about it on the final exam.

² The point of class is learning—you have to be there!

Lecture Topic	Required Reading
Orientation to Soteriology and Eschatology	HB 3, Chapter 9, pp. 485-540; <i>WC</i> Chs. 8, 9.
The relationship of "Salvation" and "Last Things" in Scripture	Gaffin, <i>By Faith</i> , Chapters 1-2; <i>SC</i> 29-30.
Union with Christ	HB 3, Chapter 9, pp. 541-595.
Union with Christ	
Regeneration	HB 4, Chapter 1. <i>WC</i> 10; <i>SC</i> 31-32.
Faith	HB 4, Chapter 2; <i>WC</i> 14; <i>SC</i> 32, 86, 87.
Sanctification	HB 4, Chapter 4; Gaffin, <i>By Faith</i> , Chapter 3; <i>WC</i> 13, 15, 16; <i>SC</i> 35, 39-83.
Justification	HB 4, Chapter 3.
Justification	Gaffin, <i>By Faith</i> , Chapter 4 and Epilogue; <i>WC</i> 11; <i>SC</i> 33.
Sanctification and Perseverance	Griffith, "'The First Title of the Spirit...'" ; <i>WC</i> 12, 17, 18; <i>SC</i> 34.
Death and Judgment	HB 4, Chapters 12-13.
Heaven and Hell	HB 4, Chapter 14; <i>WC</i> 32, 33; <i>SC</i> 37, 38.
Millennial Views, The Return of Christ	HB 4, Chapters 15-18. Waltke, "Kingdom Promises..."; Gaffin, "Theonomy and Eschatology..."
Final Exam	Congratulations!!

3. Final Exam: this 3-hour exam will cover the lectures and reading. The exam will be worth 60% of your final grade. One part of the final exam will also be on N. T. Wright,

Justification: God's Plan and Paul's Vision and "The Report on Justification Presented to the Seventy-third General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church," <http://www.opc.org/GA/justification.pdf>. You will be asked to evaluate views of justification. Administration of the exam tba.

4. Term paper: In 7-10 pages (double spaced, 12-point font) discuss a topic in the area of soteriology or eschatology. The paper is due postmarked by August 7th.³ I do not accept late papers. The paper must have a thesis statement, and appropriate biblical and theological argument of your thesis. You must use at least eight good sources including the Westminster Standards. See appendix below for other **required** term paper standards. The paper is worth 30% of your final grade. Consult the supplementary bibliography and discuss the topic with me.

5. Memorize and recite Romans 8:28-30 (any translation) and *Westminster Shorter Catechism* 30. I will ask about this on the Final Exam.

Approximate Time Investment

Lectures	36 hours
Reading	46 hours (@ 15 pages/hour)
Memorization	3 hours
Final exam (3 hours, plus preparation)	20 hours
Term paper	15 hours
Total	120 hours

Grading Scale: standard RTS grading scale (*Catalog*, p. 45).

Appendix

Policy on Late Assignments

Simply put, late exams and papers are **not** accepted based on the following rationale:⁴

"a. The issue is not so much an inconvenience to the professor. If that were the primary issue, then he would grade late papers

³ There is no need to express mail it—save yourself a little cash.

⁴ Adapted from Professor Bruce K. Waltke.

because it is fundamental to his Christian commitment to put the interests of others before his own.

b. The issue concerns the apparent laxity with which extensions are often granted. This is not Christian education. Wisdom is living within boundaries. The cosmos exists because the Creator provided boundaries for air, water, land. Moreover, he provided temporal boundaries for seasons. Without boundaries, the cosmos would degenerate back into anarchy. It is the essence of Christian living that we live within boundaries. Liberals want no boundaries. They want freedom without form, liberty without law, lovemaking without marriage. This is a fundamental battle. It is distressing when Christians do not show respect for boundaries and when students do not respect temporal boundaries.

c. Wisdom also entails knowing the goal and devising a strategy to achieve it. Students

must be aware from the syllabus what is required of them and should be able to strategize a successful model to achieve it. Laxity and uncertainty with regard to deadlines actually

confuse the students and militate against a good Christian education. Paradoxically,

“grace” sounds Christian and pastoral and “law” sounds non-Christian; but, sometimes

so-called “grace” and “pastoral concerns” encourage libertarianism and in truth is non-Christian and non-pastoral. Consciously or unconsciously

students realize that there is a

fudge factor here, enabling them to rationalize their not turning in work on time.

d. The issue also pertains to spiritual life, a subject on which a seminary rightly prides itself. However, the spiritual life includes self-control, discipline, etc. Students reap good fruit from hard work.”

Term Paper Standards

I expect you to use standard paper conventions found in Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. There is a quick version at

http://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/turabian/turabian_citationguide.html. Failure to follow these conventions will reduce your grade. Please include a title page with your name, but **omit**

headers or footers that include your name. The paper is due in hard copy in class November 16th. You may collect your graded paper at the RTS office.

Grading System for Papers:

A: Good grasp of basic issues, plus something extraordinary, worthy of publication in a technical or a popular publication. That special excellence may be of various kinds: formulation, illustration, comprehensiveness, subtlety/nuance, creativity, argument, insight, correlations with other issues, historical perspective, philosophical sophistication, and research beyond the requirements of the assignment. One of these will be enough!

A-: An A paper, except that it requires some minor improvement before an editor should finally accept it for publication.

B+: Good grasp of basic issues but without the special excellences noted above. A few minor glitches.

B: The average grade for graduate study. Good grasp of basic issues, but can be significantly improved.

B-: Shows an understanding of the issues, but marred by significant errors, unclarities (conceptual or linguistic), unpersuasive arguments, and/or shallow thinking.

C+: Raises suspicions that largely these terms and concepts are used appropriately. Does show serious study and preparation.

C: Uses ideas with some accuracy, but without mastery or insight; thus the paper is often confused.

C-: The student has a relatively poor, but barely competent, understanding of the subject.

D: I don't give D's on papers.

F: Failure to complete the assignment satisfactorily. Such performance would disqualify a candidate for ministry if it were part of a presbytery exam.

Most of my students get B's. I try to keep A's and C's to a relatively small number. F's are rare.⁵

⁵ Abbreviations for Comments on Papers: A - awkward; Amb - ambiguous; Arg - more argument needed; C - compress; Circle (drawn around some text)- usually refers to misspelling or other

Course Objectives Related to MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes

Course: 4ST520, Soteriology and Eschatology

Professor: Howard Griffith

Campus: Atlanta

Date: Summer 2010

<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 	
<p>Articulation (oral & written)</p>	<p>Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, and cultural/global</p>	<p>Strong</p>	<p>Exams and a paper on doctrinal matters vitally related to everything.</p>

obvious mistake; D - define; E - expand, elaborate, explain; EA - emphasis argument; F - too figurative for context; G - grammatical error; Ill - illegible; Illus - illustrate, give example; Int - interesting; M - misleading in context; O - overstated, overgeneralized; PS- problem in paragraph structure; R - redundant; Ref- reference (of pronoun, etc.); Rel- irrelevant, or relevance unclear; Rep - repetitious; Resp - not responsive (In a dialogue: one party raises a good question to which the other does not respond.); S - summary needed; Scr - needs more scripture support; Simp - oversimplified; SM - straw man (a view nobody holds); SS - problem in sentence structure; St - style inappropriate; T - transition needed; U - unclear; V - vague; W - questionable word-choice; Wk - weak writing (too many passives, King James English, etc.); WO - word order; WV - whose view? yours? another author?

	information, including details, concepts, and frameworks.		
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	Not an exegesis class, but we read and lecture on both systematic and biblical-theological aspects of each doctrine. Scripture memory.
Reformed Theology	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Strong	These are the most distinctive of Reformed doctrines.
Sanctification	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Strong	There is no more moving exhibition of the grace of God than in these benefits of salvation.
Desire for Worldview	Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.	Moderate	Stresses the importance of God's law for all of life.
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.)	Strong	I will seek to show the value of Reformed theology for the benefit of all Christians.

Preach	Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.	Moderate	I do some preaching in this class, but do not require the students to do any.
Worship	Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service.	None	
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.	Strong	I stress the importance of these issues as people deal with them in the Christian life.
Church/World	Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.	Moderate	We do consider common grace—thus the value of God's mercy expressed beyond the elect.