THM SEMINAR ON LAW AND GOSPEL IN CALVIN’S THEOLOGY

June 2005

Professor: Howard Griffith, Ph.D., hg11@mindspring.com

Dates: June 6-10, 2005, 9 AM - 3 PM

Place: RTS Seminar Room

Textbooks: Required

Students will be required to read the following BEFORE the seminar:

Bradley, J.E. and Muller R.A. Church History: An Introduction to Research, Reference Works and Methods (Eerdmans, 1995).


McKim, Donald K. ed. The Cambridge Companion to John Calvin. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pages 58-105 (the essays of Thompson, Hesselink and Haas) and 125-52 (the essay by Beeke).


All Required Texts are available through the online RTS Bookstore.

Recommended Reading:


**Objectives:**

This seminar is designed to introduce the graduate student to Calvin scholarship and the theme of “Law and Gospel in Calvin’s Theology,” an important and perennially discussed theme in the Reformed tradition. The seminar has three components -- lectures, student presentations and tutorials. It is the goal of the program to provide students with graduate level critical and analytical skills, a good, broad background in the field of Reformation studies as well as a high level of competence in the area of their thesis research.

**Course Requirements:**

There will be 1 major research paper (20+ pages) on a topic approved by professor. The complete first draft is due August 8th. The final draft of research paper is due August 26th.

There are also two Response Papers (7-10 pages) on the reading assignments, which are to be completed BEFORE the June session. Each paper is to be a formal, well-written, footnoted, balanced, summary, analysis and critical response to any two chapters from Hesselink, *Calvin’s Concept of the Law* (one response paper) and any two chapters from Lillback, *The Binding of God* (the other response paper).

These response papers will presented informally in the morning sessions (9 AM – 12 PM) and will provide the basis for seminar discussions. In afternoon tutorials, Professor will work with student to help (i) to assess and develop scholarly skills and (ii) to begin work on research paper for the seminar.

Student presentation (30 min) of the fruits of his/her Response Papers, followed by class discussion. Student to provide Dr. Griffith’s SECRETARY with a copy of presentations on first day of session. They will be photocopied and distributed to class.

The major research paper is 50% of the final grade. Each response paper will be 25% of the final grade.

**Seminar Schedule:**

June 6th ------ Calvin and Covenant.

June 7th ------ Law and Gospel in salvation history.
June 8th ------ The three uses of the law.

June 9th ------ Law and Gospel in the Christian life.

June 10th ---- Law and Gospel in Luther and Calvin.

**Tutorials:** 1 PM – 3 PM in Professor’s office

**INTERNET SCHEDULE FOR June Session**

**Week of June 13th** ----------------------Travel Week

**Week of June 20th** ----------------------3-5 page draft to Professor

**Week of July 4th** ----------------------Professor responds to Student Papers

**Week of July 11th** ----------------------5-7 pages to Professor

**Week of July 18th** ----------------------Professor responds to Student Papers

**Week of July 25th** ----------------------10-13 pages to Professor

**Nota Bene:** Each student should also send a copy of this draft to all seminar participants for feedback

**Week of August 1st** ----------------------All Seminar participants provide feedback for Student Paper.

**Week of August 8th** ----------------------First Draft to Professor

**Nota Bene:** Each student should also send a copy of this draft to all seminar participants for feedback

**Week of August 15th** ----------------------All Seminar participants provide feedback for Student Paper.

**Week of August 22nd** ----------------------Final Draft due to Professor.

**Final Draft due August 26th, 2005**

**Nota Bene:** All preliminary drafts will be via email. The final draft should be a hard copy of the paper and should be mailed to the professor by the due date. Address is: Dr. Howard Griffith, 2018 Stonequarter Road, Richmond, VA 23238.

**Criteria for Evaluation of THM Papers**

I. Grammar and Style (25%)
   * Is the text clean of spelling mistakes?
   * Is the text punctuated correctly?
* Does the sentence structure consistently adhere to basic rules of good grammar?
* Does the footnote/bibliographic apparatus follow Turabian consistently? (Turabian, *A Manual for Writers*).
* Is the paper written in clear, straight-forward style of academic prose (e.g., the guidelines in Strunk and White, *The Elements of Style*)?

II. Organization (25%)
* Is the subject of the paper clearly delimited? Is it significant, but still manageable?
* Does the subject correspond to what was assigned in the syllabus?
* Does the paper have a well-designed thesis statement and outline?
* Does the running text of the paper adhere to the outline, and are the larger divisions of the paper clearly signposted?
* Are the sentences and paragraphs of the text linked together clearly and in such a way that the thought of the student builds throughout the paper with continuity and coherence?

III. Clarity and Force of Argument (25%)
* Is a convincing case made to support the thesis statement?
* Is the evidence marshaled to support the argument used judiciously?
* Where the student provides exposition or summary, does she/he do so succinctly and objectively?
* Are opposing viewpoints treated fairly?
* Is there evidence of mature Christian reflection on the subject matter?

IV. Research (25%)
* Does the paper draw on primary sources for its main evidence?
* Are the secondary sources selected and used judiciously?
* Does the paper demonstrate sufficient depth and breadth of research, given the nature and level of the assignment?

Recommended Resources

