

HT506 Church and the World
Spring 2008
Wednesday, 8 am – 10 am, 11 am – noon

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An examination of the relationship between the church and modern culture and a survey of the history of American Presbyterianism in the past 300 years. Particular attention is given to differing Christian approaches to the relationship of Christ and culture, and to the impact of secularization and modernization on the ministry of the church.

Course Requirements

1. Class Attendance and Participation
2. Response Papers (20 %)
3. Denominational Analysis Paper (30 %)
4. Technology Paper (20 %)
5. Final Examination (30 %)

Textbooks:

1. Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture*
2. Machen, *Christianity and Liberalism*
3. Berry, *What are People For?*
4. *The Church Against the World* (Online reader)
5. Hart and Muether, *Seeking a Better Country*

Outline of the Course

Part I: Church and World (8 am – 10 am)

Introduction to the Class

- I. Preliminary Notes on Culture
 - A. Definition of Terms: Church & World
 - C. Heresies at the Intersection: Manicheism, Gnosticism, Docetism
 - D. Common Grace and the Antithesis

- II. Christ and Culture: "The Enduring Problem"
 - A. H. Richard Niebuhr: *Christ and Culture*
 - B. Critiques of Niebuhr
 - C. Reformed Approaches to Culture

- III. The Enlightenment & Its Effects
 - A. Liberalism
 - B. Secularization
 - C. **Modernity**
 - D. Individualism
 - E. Consumerism

- IV. Challenges to the Enlightenment
 - A. J. Gresham Machen: *Christianity and Liberalism*
 - B. Neo-Orthodoxy
 - C. Fundamentalism
 - D. Charismatic Movement
 - E. Christian Reconstruction

- V. Culture Wars
 - A. Education
 - B. "Family Values"
 - C. Other fronts

- VI. The Church and the Postmodern World

Part II: American Presbyterian History (11 am – noon)

- I. Introduction: How to Spell Presbyterianism
 - A. The Presbyterian Tripod: Theology, Polity, and Worship
 - B. Presbyterian Dialects: Charting American Presbyterianism

- II. 18th Century: The Old World Comes to the New World
 - A. Presbyterian Roots
 - B. Old Side-New Side Debate
 - C. Reformed Spirituality and Revivals
 - D. Presbyterians at War: the American Revolution

- III. 19th Century: Confessionalism and Voluntarism
 - A. Plan of Union
 - B. Old School-New School Debate
 - C. The Spirituality of the Church and the Evangelical Benevolent Empire
 - D. Presbyterians at War: the Civil War (& the Gilded Age)

- IV. 20th Century: Sectarianism and Ecumenism
 - A. Fundamentalist-Modernist Debate
 - B. Reformed Polity and Neo-Evangelicalism
 - C. Presbyterians at War: the Culture Wars