

ST 520 – Systematic Theology 3

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*Reformed Theological Seminary, Orlando
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MEETING TIMES

This course meets Wednesdays, 1-4 pm, August 20 – November 26, 2008.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. In this course we will study the doctrine of redemption, which includes:

- The *basis* of redemption in the Father's plan (the Covenant of Redemption, the Covenant of Grace);
- The *accomplishment* of redemption through the Son's humiliation and exaltation (the doctrine of the work of Christ);
- The *application* of redemption by the Spirit's power and presence (the doctrine of salvation); and
- The *consummation* of redemption in the kingdom of the triune God (the doctrine of last things, i.e., eschatology).

2. The goal of our study will be:

- To understand and appreciate these truths as they are taught in Scripture and confessed in the Reformed tradition;
- So that we may live in the light of these truths to the glory of the triune God.

TEXTS

Herman Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics, Volume 3: Sin and Salvation in Christ* (Baker), ISBN: 0801026563

Herman Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics, Volume 4: Holy Spirit, Church, and New Creation* (Baker), ISBN: 0801026571

Henri Blocher, "Atonement," in *Dictionary for Theological Interpretation of the Bible*, ed., Kevin J. Vanhoozer (available from professor)

C. S. Lewis, "The Weight of Glory" (available at: <http://www.doxaweb.com/assets/doxa.pdf>)

The Westminster Confession of Faith (available in many formats)

ASSIGNMENTS

1. Reading Report: (25 % of final grade) On the final exam there will be a question asking students to state the *percentage* of the assigned reading that they have read with reasonable care by the due date of the exam.

2. Exams: (40 % of final grade) Students will take two exams that will test comprehension and critical grasp of lectures, readings, and relevant chapters of the Westminster Confession of Faith (chapters 3, 5, 7-19, 32-33). The exams will consist of *objective questions* and *essay questions*.

3. Paper: (25 % of final grade) Students will write a research paper (15-20 pages, double spaced) on the doctrine of justification. The paper should include:

- (i) A precise theological definition of the doctrine of justification;
- (ii) A careful exposition of the doctrine of justification as taught in Scripture and confessed by the Reformed churches (note: you may argue from Scripture for or against the confessional viewpoint);
- (iii) A discussion of *either* (a) the relationship between the traditional Reformed doctrine of justification and N. T. Wright's view of justification *or* (b) the relationship between the doctrines of justification and sanctification.

The paper will be graded on the basis of the following criteria:

- (i) Conformity to the above instructions;
- (ii) Clarity of expression (use a proofreader!!!);

(iii) Cogency of theological explanation, argumentation, and analysis (state your thesis early on and defend it with arguments and evidence);

(iv) Quality of research (*note*: a bibliography must be attached).

An “A” paper will follow the instructions exactly, be written clearly (with only one or two grammatical or style mistakes), masterfully interact with biblical and confessional teaching, display critical interaction with a wide variety of resources, and provide a coherent, compelling explanation of the doctrine of justification.

In order to succeed in writing this paper, you must *begin early, research widely, and reflect deeply*. Late research papers will not be accepted.

4. Sinclair Ferguson audio: (10 % of final grade) Students will listen to select audio lectures by Sinclair Ferguson on the Westminster Confession of Faith (available in the library). On the final exam, there will be a question asking whether or not you have listened to these audio lectures.

5. Extra Credit: Bavinck outlines.

SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS

Aug 20

Aug 27

Blocher, “Atonement”;
Bavinck 3, chap 5

Sep 3

Bavinck 3, chap 7

Sep 10

Sep 17

Bavinck 3, chap 8

Sep 24

Oct 1

Bavinck 3, chap 9

Oct 8

Exam 1 due

Oct 15

No class—Reading Week

Oct 22

Bavinck 4, chaps 1-2

Oct 29

Bavinck 4, chap 3

Nov 5	Bavinck 4, chap 4
Nov 12	Bavinck 4, chaps 12-14
Nov 19	Bavinck 4, chaps 15-16
Nov 26	Lewis, "The Weight of Glory"; Bavinck 4, chaps. 17-18
Dec 3	Research paper due
Dec 9	Exam 2 due; reading report due; Ferguson audio report due

Appointments

To schedule an appointment, please send me an email at sswain@rts.edu.