

6ST520 Systematic Theology 3: Salvation and Last Things
(3 Cr)
RTS Washington
Fall 2006

Instructor: Howard Griffith, Ph.D.

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McLean Presbyterian Church
September 8-9, October 27-28,
November 17-18 and December 1-2

Fri 7:30-10pm; Sat 9am-3pm

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Purpose of the Course

This course is designed to help the student understand the way God brings us to salvation, the *application* and the *consummation* of Christ's redemption. We will seek to understand the biblical-theological basis, historical discussion, and contemporary application of these doctrines so that we may better believe and proclaim the Gospel.

Reading List

(The specific assignments are in the next section.)

The photocopies will be available on the first day of class for \$5)

John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, trans. F. L. Battles (ed. J. T. McNeill, *The Library of Christian Classics*, 20; Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960).

Richard B. Gaffin, "Biblical Theology and the Westminster Standards," *Westminster Theological Journal* 65 (2003): 165-79; also found at
<http://www.beginningwithmoses.org/articles/gaffinbt.htm>

Richard B. Gaffin, "The Usefulness of the Cross,"
<http://www.beginningwithmoses.org/articles/usefulnessofthecross.htm>

Richard B. Gaffin, "Theonomy and Eschatology: Reflections on Postmillennialism," from *Theonomy, A Reformed Critique* (ed. William S. Barker and W. Robert Godfrey, Grand Rapids, Mi.: Zondervan, 1990), 197-224; also found at
<http://newhope2.timberlakepublishing.com/files/Gaffin%20Theonomy%20and%20Eschatology.pdf>

Anthony A. Hoekema, *Saved By Grace* (Grand Rapids, Mi.: Eerdmans, 1994).

Anthony A. Hoekema, *The Bible and the Future* (Grand Rapids, Mi.: Eerdmans, 1979).

The Westminster Confession of Faith.

Assignments:

➤ **Read (by the assigned date):**

September 8-9 –

Introduction to the course.

1. Orientation to soteriology and eschatology.

Preliminary remarks.

Place of soteriology in theology.

Relationship of salvation and last things in Scripture.

**The distinction between redemption accomplished and redemption applied
(*Historia Salutis* and *Ordo Salutis*).**

**Christ's work, once for all time, for the whole church. Christ's saving of
each individual.**

The danger of blurring the distinction.

The danger of overemphasis on the *ordo*. The Westminster Standards.

The resurrection of Christ and soteriology.

Required reading:

Hoekema, *Saved By Grace*, 3-53.

Calvin, *Institutes*, 3:1:1-4 (pp. 537-42).

October 27-28 –

2. Union with Christ. Distinct senses in Scripture.

3. The context of union with Christ.

Effectual Calling.

Regeneration.

4. The realization of union with Christ.

Faith and Repentance.

Required reading:

Gaffin, "Biblical Theology and the Westminster Standards."

Hoekema, *Saved By Grace*, 54-151.

Calvin, *Institutes*, 3:2 – 3:10 (pp. 542-725); 3:24:8-11 (pp. 974-78).

Westminster Confession of Faith, chapters 10, 14-17.

November 17-18 –

5. The benefits of union with Christ.

Justification.

Sanctification and Assurance.

Adoption.

Perseverance.

Required reading:

Hoekema, *Saved By Grace*, 152-256.

Calvin, *Institutes*, 3:11 – 3:24 (pp. 725-987).

Westminster Confession of Faith, chapters 11-13, 17, 18.

Gaffin, “The Usefulness of the Cross.”

6. Redemptive history and the structure of biblical eschatology – inaugurated eschatology.

Required reading:

Hoekema, *Bible and the Future*, 3-163.

December 1 – 2

7. Future eschatology.

Required reading:

Calvin, *Institutes*, 3:25 (pp. 907-1008).

Hoekema, *Bible and the Future*, 164-287.

Westminster Confession of Faith, chapters 32-33.

Gaffin, “Theonomy and Eschatology.”

➤ **Class Participation:**

Beginning on September 9th, each student will be assigned a reading for which he or she will be especially responsible during class. This is required of every student. (Though certain students will be especially responsible, *all* students must complete the reading for the class as well.)

➤ **Memorize:**

Ephesians 2:8-10 (any translation), and recite to a friend. Tell me you have accomplished this on the final exam.

➤ **Paper:** 10-15 pages, double spaced, due December 2nd. (**Late papers are not accepted.**)

Policy on Late Papers and Exams:

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

- a. The issue is not so much an inconvenience to the professor. If that were the primary issue, then he would grade late papers 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 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.”¹

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.

¹ Adapted from Professor Bruce Waltke.

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 or exams.

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 extremely rare.²

➤ **Exam:**

There will be a three hour take-home final examination covering the lectures and the two books by Anthony A. Hoekema, due December 9th (**late exams are not accepted.**) It will not be open note or book. You will be required to sign an honor pledge stating that you received no additional help and that you completed the exam within the permitted three-hour time frame. Also, tell me on the final what percent of the total reading you accomplished (this will count in your exam grade).

Grades:

Paper, 30%; Final Exam, 70%.

Grading Scale:

The standard RTS grading scale (found on page 38 of the catalog) will be used.

A	(97-100)	4.00
A-	(94-96)	3.66
B+	(91-93)	3.33
B	(88-90)	3.00
B-	(86-87)	2.66
C+	(83-85)	2.33
C	(80-82)	2.00
C-	(78-79)	1.66
D+	(75-77)	1.33
D	(72-74)	1.00
D-	(70-71)	.66
F	(below 70)	0.00

² Adapted from Professor John Frame.