

ST 3, The Doctrines of Soteriology and Eschatology



Reformed Theological Seminary
Washington D.C.

6ST520 (3 Credits)
McLean Presbyterian Church
Spring 2009
Thursday 7:30 – 10, February 5 – May 28, 2009 (no class April 9th)

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Office Hours: I will be at Greenberry's Coffee and Tea in McLean each Thursday before class, at 6:15. I will have my cell 703-408-3157.

Course Description:

Goals¹

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) (If you have trouble ordering this or other books from Amazon, try the Westminster Seminary bookstore at www.wtsbooks.com). Focus your reading by using the Study Guide found on iqweb.

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

¹ Taking the systematic theology courses in sequence (despite statements to the contrary!) will increase your ability in theology. However, first-time students may like to look at S. Grenz, *Pocket Dictionary of Theological Terms*, and J. I. Packer, *Concise Theology* (they are not assigned).

Richard B. Gaffin, “Theonomy and Eschatology: Reflections on Postmillennialism” on iqweb.

Howard Griffith, “‘The First Title of the Spirit’: Adoption in Calvin’s Soteriology” (on iqweb).

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

N. T. Wright, *What Saint Paul Really Said: Was Paul of Tarsus Really the Founder of Christianity?* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1997).

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 iqweb.

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

Assignments

1. Class attendance is required. I will not call the roll, but students who are often absent or late without excuse will be penalized.
2. You are asked to complete all reading assignments on the dates indicated below.² Completed reading will be worth 10% of your final grade. I will ask about it on the final exam.

Weekly Assignments

Date	Lecture Topic	Required Reading
February 5	Orientation to Soteriology and Eschatology	HB 3, Chapter 9, pp. 485-540; <i>WC</i> Chs. 8, 9.
February 12	The relationship of “Salvation” and “Last Things” in Scripture	Gaffin, <i>By Faith</i> , Chapters 1-2; <i>SC</i> 29-30.
February 19	Union with Christ	HB 3, Chapter 9, pp. 541-595.
February 26	Union with Christ	
March 5	Regeneration	HB 4, Chapter 1. <i>WC</i> 10; <i>SC</i> 31-32.
March 12	Faith	HB 4, Chapter 2; <i>WC</i> 14, 15; <i>SC</i> 32, 86, 87.
March 19	Justification	HB 4, Chapter 3.
March 26	Justification	Gaffin, <i>By Faith</i> , Chapter 4

² Note there are other readings that will be tested on the final exam. See 4. below.

		and Epilogue; <i>WC</i> 11; <i>SC</i> 33.
April 2	Sanctification	HB 4, Chapter 4; Gaffin, <i>By Faith</i> , Chapter 3; <i>WC</i> 13, 16; <i>SC</i> 35, 39-83.
April 16	Sanctification and Perseverance	Griffith, ““The First Title of the Spirit...””; <i>WC</i> 12, 17, 18; <i>SC</i> 34.
April 23 Midterm exam due	Death and Judgment	HB 4, Chapters 12-13.
April 30	Heaven and Hell	HB 4, Chapter 14; <i>WC</i> 32, 33; <i>SC</i> 37, 38.
May 7	Millennial Views	HB 4, Chapters 15-16. Waltke, “Kingdom Promises...”; Gaffin, “Theonomy and Eschatology...”
May 14	The Return of Christ	HB 4, Chapter 17.
May 21	The New Earth	HB 4, Chapter 18.
May 28	Final Exam	Congratulations!!

3. Midterm Exam on the Doctrine of Soteriology (everything we have covered to that point). This 2-hour exam will be posted on iqweb, and you may take it any time from Friday, April 17th until Thursday, April 23rd. The exam is due at the beginning of class on Thursday, April 23rd. I do not accept late exams. This exam will be worth 45 % of your final grade.

4. Final Exam, on the Doctrine of Eschatology (all material covered since the midterm). One part of the final exam will also be on N. T. Wright, *What Saint Paul Really Said* 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.

This 3-hour exam will be given in class on the evening of May 28th at 7:30 pm. The exam will be worth 45% of your final grade.

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)
Midterm Exam (2 hours, plus preparation)	15 hours
Memorization	3 hours

Final exam (2 hours, plus preparation)	30 hours
Total	130 hours ³

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

Appendix

Policy on Late Assignments

Simply put, late exams 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 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.”

³ 94 hours (not including class hours)/75 days (= 5 days/week, not including class days or Sundays, minus Easter week) = 1.25 hours/day.

⁴ Adapted from Professor Bruce K. Waltke.