Introduction to Pastoral and Theological Studies

Reformed Theological Seminary
Washington D.C.

6ST502 (3 Credits)
McLean Presbyterian Church
Fall 2009
Wednesday 7:30 PM - 10:00 PM, September 2nd – December 16\(^{th}\) (no class November 26\(^{th}\))

Dr. Howard Griffith
Assistant Professor of Systematic Theology
hgriffith@rts.edu
703-408-3157

Office Hours: make an appointment – I will be delighted to meet with you.

Soiree: Jackie and I would like to invite you and spouses/dates (sorry, no children) to dinner at our home on Saturday, November 7\(^{th}\) at 5 p.m. Dress is casual. Please come and enjoy food and friends. Our address is 13939 Malcolm Jameson Way, Centreville, Virginia 20120.

Course Description:

This course introduces biblical, theological and ministry studies in the Reformed tradition. It is most usefully taken as an introduction to the RTS curriculum, that is, in the beginning of your studies (especially of systematic theology). We will seek to understand the Reformed family profile in history, piety and worldview. Most important, we will work at constructing theology – what is a biblical, orthodox and Reformed theology?

Lecture Outline

1. Reformed Family Profile – History, worldview and worship
   1.1 Reformed Theology in the history of theology
      1.1.1 Reformed Theology is catholic (universal).
      1.1.2 Reformed Theology is Protestant.
      1.1.3 Reformed Soteriology – “God saves sinners.”
         1.1.3.1 Discussion of Packer’s “Introduction to the Death of Death”
         1.1.3.2 Five points (ULTIP)
1.1.3.2.1 Unconditional Election
1.1.3.2.2 Definite (Limited) Atonement
1.1.3.2.3 Total Depravity
1.1.3.2.4 Irresistible Grace
1.1.3.2.5 Perseverance of the Saints

1.2 The Bible and confessions of faith
1.3 Piety
1.4 Worldview – creation, fall, redemption
   Creation ordinances: labor, Sabbath, marriage, procreation
1.5 Worship and the Word

2. Biblical Interpretation
2.1 What is the bible?
2.2 The unity of the Bible – history, literature, and theology

3. Theological method
3.1 Theology
3.2 Theology and revelation
3.3 Theology and faith
3.4 Theology and epistemology
3.5 Theology and God as self-revealing
3.6 Language: God’s and ours
   3.6.1 Curriculum, Biblical Theology and Systematic Theology
3.7 General Revelation and Special Revelation

**Texts**

*The Canons of Dordt* (available at the course homepage on iqweb).


James I. Packer, “Introduction to John Owen’s *Death of Death in the Death of Christ*” (on iqweb).
The Westminster Confession of Faith (on iqweb).

Assignments

1. Class attendance is required. I won’t 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. Completed reading will be worth 10% of your final grade. I will ask about it on the final exam.

Weekly Assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Date</th>
<th>Lecture Topic</th>
<th>Reading Completed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September 2</td>
<td>Reformed Theology in the history of theology.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 9</td>
<td></td>
<td>Marcel, In God’s School.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 16</td>
<td>Tulip (“ultip”)</td>
<td>Packer, “Introduction to The Death of Death”; The Canons of Dordt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 23</td>
<td>Biblical basis of ultip</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 30</td>
<td>History, worship and worldview</td>
<td>JM, Chapters 10-12.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 7</td>
<td>History, worship and worldview</td>
<td>Reading choice 1.c.  See below.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 14</td>
<td>Student Presentations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 21</td>
<td>History, worship and worldview</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 4</td>
<td>Biblical Interpretation</td>
<td>According to Plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 11</td>
<td>Theology</td>
<td>JM, Chapters 1-3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 18</td>
<td>Theology</td>
<td>JM, Chapters 4-5.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2</td>
<td>Theology</td>
<td>JM, Chapter 13.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 9</td>
<td>Theology</td>
<td>JM, Chapters 14-15.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 16</td>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>Congratulations!!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Readings
1. Reformation family profile:
   a. Pierre Marcel, *In God’s School.* (You are not required to complete all the daily Bible readings.) Introduction to the piety of the Reformation.
   
   
c. Choose one of the following:
      
      • J. Gresham Machen, *Christianity and Liberalism.* Explains a great crisis in American church life.
      
      or,
      
      


3. Writing

1. A class presentation of 15-20 minutes responding to your choice of reading in 1.c. above (Machen or Muether). What issues did you find interesting or challenging there? What questions did they provoke? Were the authors’ answers adequate? How might you seek to answer them better? What impact did they have on your sense of call to ministry? I want you to interact with something substantial in the material, not just give your own impressions. In other words, give me both. Class presentations will be made on October 14th. Provide a single-page outline of your thoughts at the previous class on October 7th. This is worth 20% of your final grade.

2. An 8-12 page essay responding to *The Westminster Confession of Faith.* The Ward *Study Guide* will help your study. What questions does it raise for you? What questions does it answer? This is a beginning exercise in view of church doctrinal exams, which most students will have at some point. This is due at the beginning of class on November 11th.
Although this is an essay rather than a research paper, I expect you to use standard paper conventions found in Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. There is a short form at [http://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/turabian/turabian_citationguide.html](http://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/turabian/turabian_citationguide.html). Use this format if you have citations in your paper. Failure to follow these rules reduce your grade. Please put your name only on the title page, not on headers or footers. This is worth 20% of your final grade.

3. There will be a 2-hour final exam on the lectures and the Murray articles. The test will be given at 7:30 pm on December 16th. In answering the questions, I expect you to give as much detail as possible (biblical texts, terms, and explanation). This is worth 50% of your final grade.

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

### Approximate Time Required

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class lectures</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marcel, <em>In God’s School</em></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to <em>The Death of Death &amp; Dordt</em></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.c. reading (choice) plus presentation</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.d. <em>Westminster Confession of Faith</em> plus essay</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>According to Plan</em></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murray chapters</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation for the final exam</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Appendix**

**Policy on Late Papers:**

Simply put, late papers 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 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.”

Supplemental Bibliography


Kuyper, Abraham. *Lectures on Calvinism.*


---

1 Adapted from Professor Bruce K. Waltke.


Packer, James I. *Concise Theology* (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway).


*An Exam*

**Introduction to Pastoral and Theological Studies**

**FINAL EXAMINATION**

Spring 2008

TIME LIMIT: **three** (3) hours

NOTE: You may use an English Bible (as well as the Bible in the original languages), without notes or other helps.

*******************************************************************

1. What are the five points of Calvinism, and why are they important?

2. What are the “creation ordinances” and what place do they have in a Christian worldview?

3. Discuss Frame’s presentation of a non-Christian view of God’s immanence and transcendence contrasted with the Christian view of God’s immanence and transcendence.

4. I completed ____% of the required reading.

This pledge must be written out and signed on your examination paper:

    I pledge my honor that I have neither given nor received any assistance -- verbal, written, or electronic -- on this examination beyond that specifically permitted by the instructor in charge.

*******************************************************************

You may collect your graded exam at the RTS office.