3ST528/01: Pastoral and Social Ethics

Reformed Theological Seminary
Charlotte, North Carolina

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Catalog Description

3ST528: Pastoral and Social Ethics. 3 hours
Students are introduced to terminology, major views, and problems in the study of ethics and to a biblical basis for morality. Basic concerns and current issues in social ethics are covered.

Course Requirements

1. **Attendance.** Class attendance is required.

2. **Complete all reading assignments.** Below is a form requiring your signature indicating that you have completed the assigned reading. It is to be submitted along with your final examination. If you do not complete the reading, please indicate how much you have completed. This will be worth 5% of your grade. *In previous courses, failure to complete the reading assignments has often made the difference between one letter grade and another in the final grade. Given the sheer volume of reading, it cannot be left to a day or two the week before the due date. See “A Word to the Wise” on page 3 of this syllabus. Reading must be completed by August 7, 2009.*

3. **Paper.** An 8-10 page paper (double-spaced, 12 pt. font, 1.5 inch margins, roughly 250 words per page) is required, dealing with a specific ethical issue of your own choosing. Give a one paragraph, single-spaced, description of the issue as it might arise in a pastoral setting. Indicate how the problem should be understood and handled from a Biblical point of view. You must include in your paper appropriate Biblical passages, interaction with the assigned readings in the syllabus and other
literature (two or three sources), and a clear statement of your own position on the issue. Extensive research is not required. This is a position paper, not a research paper. Your own analysis, based on Scripture and informed by other reading, is the main focus of the paper. Twenty hours should be sufficient for completing this assignment. It will be worth 25% of your final grade. It is due by August 7, 2009.

4. **Final Examination.** The final examination will be based on the lectures, classroom discussion, and the reading. *You must not presume that if a topic is not discussed in class, it will not appear on the final. Quite the contrary: every effort will be made by the professor to represent on the final each part of the required work, so that each one will be rewarded according to the work he/she has done.* For the final exam you may use a Bible without study notes. The exam will be in two parts. Part I will contain 20 identification questions, requiring one or two sentences to define or explain a term or concept. Each question will be worth 1 point of your final grade. Part II will consist of five essay questions, requiring 3-4 paragraphs to answer. Each question will be worth 10 points of your final grade. Essay questions will first be given letter grades and then converted into numerical grades (A = 10, A- = 9.6, B+ = 9.2, B = 9.0, B- = 8.7, C+ = 8.4, C = 8.1, C- = 7.8, D+ = 7.6, D = 7.3, D- = 7.1, F = 0-7.0). Students living within two hours drive must take the exam on campus. Those living more distant may make arrangements with the registrar to have the exam proctored elsewhere. **The exam must be completed by August 7, 2009.**

**Required Reading**

6.* **Lewis, C. S.** *Mere Christianity* (any edition). **Read only Books I and III.**
8. **The Westminster Assembly’s Larger Catechism** (any edition with prooftexts!). *Qs. 91-154.*

* Notice that Amazon.com has both of the Lewis’ books (along with several others) available in one paperback volume for less money than purchasing both separately. See *The Complete C. S. Lewis Signature Classics*, ISBN-10: 0061208493, ISBN-13: 978-0061208492.
A Word to the Wise

For which of you, when he wants to build a tower, does not first sit down and calculate the cost to see if he has enough to complete it

Luke 14:28

1. Estimated Time Allotment:

A three credit seminary class normally involves 39 hours of class room instruction (with breaks), plus twice that time spent outside of class in reading, researching, thinking, and writing. Thus, if a week of class time is given to this course, you will need two more full weeks before August 7, 2009, to complete the assigned work. Calculate the cost and plan ahead. If anyone has an ear, let him hear!

| Class time:  | 39 hours |
| Reading:     | 55 hours* |
| Paper:       | 20 hours  |
| Exam:        | 3 hours   |
| **Total:**   | **117 hours** |

* Estimated time for reading, note-taking, and reviewing:

Please complete the reading of Holmes, both of Lewis, Leff, and Kevan before the class begins. The Larger Catechism will be read during the week of class. Douma and Murray can be completed anytime before August 7.

Holmes, Ethics 4 hours
Lewis, Mere Christianity (Read only Books I and III.) 3 hours
Lewis, The Abolition of Man 3 hours
Leff, “Unspeakable Ethics, Unnatural Law” 2 hours
Kevan, Moral Law 3 hours
The Larger Catechism, Qs. 91-154. 10 hours
Douma, The Ten Commandments 15 hours
Murray, Principles of Conduct 15 hours

**Total** 55 hours

2. Final Grade.

You will receive a numerical grade for your course work, based on the total points you accumulate from the reading (5 pts.), the term paper (25 pts.), and the final exam (70 pts.).
Name: (please print) ______________________________________________

Date: _______________________________________

I hereby certify in writing that I have completed the reading assignments as indicated below:

Circle or complete as appropriate:

I have completed all reading assignments:       Yes          No

If no, please indicate how much reading you have completed by pages completed of the total:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>pages/total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Holmes, <em>Ethics</em></td>
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<tr>
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<td>Murray, <em>Principles of Conduct</em></td>
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Signed: __________________________________________________

PLEASE SUBMIT THIS FORM, ALONG WITH YOUR TERM PAPER AND FINAL EXAM, TO THE FRONT DESK AT RTS CHARLOTTE BY AUGUST 7, 2009.