HT506 – Church and the World
Reformed Theological Seminary, Charlotte
Spring 2011

I. Details
A. Times: Thursdays, 8:30–11:00 AM
B. Instructor: Dr. James Anderson
C. Contact: janderson@rts.edu
D. Availability: If you wish to discuss some aspect of the course, please either arrange (via email) an appointment or knock on the door of my office (in E building) if it’s open.

II. Goals
A. To familiarize the student with the theological landscape of the 20th century: its major movements and its most influential figures.
B. To introduce the student to the various ways in which Christian thinkers from different traditions have engaged with their culture: philosophy, science, politics, etc.
C. To help the student understand the forces that have shaped modern evangelicalism (i.e., to understand “how we got to where we are now”).
D. To give the student an appreciation of the contemporary challenges faced by the church through its call to be “in the world” but not “of the world”.

III. Course Overview
A. Background: The Enlightenment (Premodernism to Modernism)
B. Liberalism: Schleiermacher, Ritschl, and Harnack
C. Against Liberalism: Fundamentalism and Machen’s Christianity & Liberalism
D. Neo-Orthodoxy: Barth and Brunner
E. Existentialist Theology: Bultmann and Tillich
F. Process Theology: Hartshorne
G. Theologies of Hope/History: Moltmann and Pannenberg
H. Liberation Theologies: Latin American, Black, Feminist, and Queer
I. Background: The Postmodern Turn (Modernism to Postmodernism)
J. Postliberal Theology: Frei and Lindbeck
K. Radical Orthodoxy: Milbank, Pickstock, and Ward
L. Pluralist Theology: Hick
M. Post-Evangelicalism: McLaren, Pagitt, and Jones
N. Church and Culture: Niebuhr’s Christ and Culture
O. Global Christianity: Jenkins’ The Next Christendom

IV. Course Requirements
A. Class attendance and thoughtful participation.
   1. As per seminary policy, you are required to attend all the lectures. If you know that you will be unable to attend class on a particular date, please inform me in advance, otherwise you may be penalized for your absence.
2. There will be opportunity for class participation and questions during the lectures.
3. A proportion of your final grade (see below) will depend on your attendance record and your participation in the classes (thoughtful interaction with the professor and other students).

B. Reading assignments.
1. A proportion of your final exam mark (and thus your final grade) will depend on your acknowledgment that you have completed the required readings (see below).
2. You will be penalized for each uncompleted reading assignment.
3. A reading schedule will be provided at the start of class (available on the Course Home Page).

C. Writing assignment.
1. You should write a paper (3500–4500 words, excluding footnotes) based on one of the thinkers covered in class (Machen, Barth, Bultmann, Tillich, Moltmann, Hick, McLaren, Niebuhr, etc.). You are free to choose whichever one you want, but be sure to choose one that gives you the scope to write a good paper. If you’re in any doubt, consult with me first!
2. The paper should be themed as follows: Imagine if your chosen thinker were to attend your local church for a year (either your home church or the church where you currently worship). Based on your understanding of the main concerns and claims of your chosen thinker, what recommendations would he (or she) give as to how your church could more faithfully or effectively engage with the world around it? (Clearly you will have to consider what would count as ‘faithful’ or ‘effective’ for this particular person!)
3. In essence, the paper requires (a) analysis of your chosen thinker, (b) analysis of your church’s current engagement with culture/society, (c) application of the former to the latter, and (d) an evaluation of this application in the light of Scripture and reason.
4. Your paper should include all of the following:
   i. An explanation (not merely a statement) of what your chosen thinker would recommend for your church, documented from at least one primary source and any number of secondary sources.
   ii. An explanation of why these recommendations would be made for your church.
   iii. A positive appraisal of these recommendations (i.e., how your church could benefit from the insights of this person). If you can’t find anything positive to say, then you should choose another thinker!
   iv. A critical assessment of these recommendations in the light of your reading of Scripture.
5. Your paper will be graded according to the following criteria, in no particular order: responsible use of Scripture, responsible use of sources, creativity, clarity, structure and coherence, cogency of argument, practical relevance, evidence of critical thinking, and good writing style (inc. grammar, spelling, and punctuation).
6. The paper should cite at least 8 scholarly sources.
   i. For the purposes of this paper, a scholarly source is a book or article by a recognized expert in the field (and not aimed at a popular level for a general audience)—ideally one that has been peer-reviewed.
Wikipedia is clearly not a scholarly source. That said, with sufficient discernment, Wikipedia can be a useful pointer to scholarly sources and is generally reliable for fact-checking on uncontroversial issues. Please consult me if you have any doubts about whether a source is scholarly. You should not rely heavily on web-based sources. Use the library!

The paper should be word-processed, not hand-written.

- Use a 12-point font and double line-spacing for the main text.
- Use section headings where applicable to improve readability.
- Use footnotes (10-point font) rather than endnotes.
- Use a recognized scholarly style for citations (e.g., Chicago, Turabian, SBL).

The paper should be submitted with a title page containing all of the following: the name and year of the course; your name; the professor’s name; the title of the paper; and the exact word count for the main text of the paper (obtained from your word processor’s word-count feature).

You will be penalized if you do not observe the requirements and guidelines above.

Your paper is due on May 10. It should be submitted to the assistant (usually Linda Dixon) at the main front desk on or prior to this date. Ensure that the assistant stamps the paper with the date of submission. Late submissions will be penalized.

Your paper will be returned to you after grading with limited feedback. Consult the document “Guide to Annotations on Graded Papers” to crack the code. If you wish to receive more detailed feedback, please email me to arrange an appointment.

**D. Midterm exam.**

1. The midterm exam will be taken in the week before the spring break: March 7–11.
2. The exam will consist of multiple-choice questions based on the class material covered to date.
3. At your convenience you should pick up the exam paper from the assistant at the front desk and take the exam in the library.

**E. Final exam.**

1. The final exam will be taken in exam week: May 12–17.
2. The exam will consist of a combination of short-answer and short-essay questions based on all of the class material and all of the required readings. You will have 2 hours to complete it.
3. You may refer to an English translation of the Bible (but not one with study notes, etc.). You may not refer to any class notes or other study resources.
4. You will be asked to sign a declaration that you have not discussed the content of the exam with any other students before taking it.
5. You will also be asked to indicate which of the required reading assignments you have completed and to sign a declaration to that effect.

**V. Course Documents**

**A. Instructions for accessing course documents on Course Home Page.**

1. Login to the Self-Service website (https://selfservice.rts.edu).
2. Select Classes > Schedule > Student Schedule.
3. Select the period (“2011/Spring”) from the drop-down menu.
4. Click on the link “Go to Course Home Page” for the relevant class.
5. Select **Course Documents**.
6. All the course documents can be found in the “Section Media” folder.

B. **Course outline.**

1. Other than the syllabus, the course outline is the most important document. You will need a copy (either electronic or printed) in front of you throughout the class.
2. You are strongly encouraged to supplement the outline with your own notes.
3. The outline will be uploaded to the Course Home Page the week before class.

C. **Supplementary documents.**

1. The reading schedule and one of the required readings (see below) will be available on the Course Home Page.
2. You should also consult the document “Guide to Annotations on Graded Papers”.

VI. **Grading**

A. Class attendance and participation — 10%
B. Midterm exam — 20%
C. Final exam (including credit for reading assignments) — 30%
D. Writing assignment — 40%

VII. **Required Readings**

D. J. Gresham Machen, *Christianity & Liberalism* (Eerdmans, 1923). [Various reprints are available.]

**Note:** You should obtain copies of all of the above. A reading schedule will be provided at the start of class (available on the Course Home Page).

VIII. **Recommended Supplementary Readings**

B. D. A. Carson, *Christ and Culture Revisited* (Eerdmans, 2008). [As the title indicates, this is Carson’s revisiting and updating of Niebuhr’s classic work. Not one of Carson’s best works—it raises more questions than it answers in the end—but still provides many useful and provocative insights.]
C. Sinclair B. Ferguson and David F. Wright, eds., *New Dictionary of Theology* (InterVarsity Press, 1988). [Contains concise articles on many of the figures and movements discussed in the course, but somewhat dated now (e.g., no articles on recent postmodern movements).]


F. James Davison Hunter, *To Change the World: The Irony, Tragedy, & Possibility of Christianity in the Late Modern World* (Oxford University Press, 2010). [Hunter offers explanations for why Christian efforts to change the world have so often failed or turned out to be counterproductive. Includes critiques of the Christian Right (e.g., Colson), Left (e.g., Wallis), and Neo-Anabaptists (e.g., Hauerwas). Hunter’s thesis is sure to provoke discussion for some time to come.]

G. Philip Jenkins, *The New Faces of Christianity: Believing the Bible in the Global South* (Oxford University Press, 2006). [Jenkins’ follow-up to *The Next Christendom* in which he discusses further the differences between the northern and southern hemispheres with regard to Christian beliefs and practices.]

H. Abraham Kuyper, *Lectures on Calvinism* (Hendrickson, 2008). [A series of lectures delivered at Princeton Theological Seminary in 1898 in which Kuyper, a Dutch Calvinist theologian and statesman, argues that Reformed theology is a worldview that has significant implications for all aspects of human culture. Various editions available.]

**Note:** You are not required to read any of the above, but you may find them useful to consolidate the course material and for further study as your interests dictate. For many of these, the table of contents can be viewed on Amazon.com or Google Books.
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<th>MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes</th>
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| **Articulation (oral & written)**                                                                | Moderate | 1. Integrative research/application paper based on primary sources  
2. Short essay exam tests knowledge and articulation of course topics |
| Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, and cultural/global information, including details, concepts, and frameworks. |        |                    |
| **Scripture**                                                                                    | Minimal | 1. Discusses use/misuse of Scripture by modern theologians |
| Significant knowledge of the original meaning of Scripture. Also, the concepts for and skill to research further into the original meaning of Scripture and to apply Scripture to a variety of modern circumstances. (Includes appropriate use of original languages and hermeneutics; and integrates theological, historical, and cultural/global perspectives.) |        |                    |
| **Reformed Theology**                                                                            | Minimal | 1. Contemporary theologies contrasted with confessional Reformed views of God, humanity, Scripture, etc. |
| Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards. |        |                    |
| **Sanctification**                                                                               | None    |                    |
| Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student’s sanctification.                    |        |                    |
| **Desire for Worldview**                                                                         | Moderate | 1. Highlights role of anti-biblical presuppositions in theological movements  
2. Emphasizes consequences of low view of Bible for subsequent theology |
| Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.                                         |        |                    |
| **Winsomely Reformed**                                                                           | Moderate | 1. Explores Machen’s position in Fundamentalism-Liberalism debate  
2. Notes points where the Reformed can learn from non-Reformed and non-Evangelical theologians |
| Embraces a winsomely Reformed ethos. (Includes an appropriate ecumenical spirit with other Christians, especially Evangelicals; a concern to present the Gospel in a God-honoring manner to non-Christians; and a truth-in-love attitude in disagreements.) |        |                    |
| **Preach**                                        | Minimal | 1. Notes challenges involved in communicating Christian doctrines to people in modern/postmodern age |
| Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm. |        |                    |
| **Worship**                                       | None    |                    |
| Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service. |        |                    |
| **Shepherd**                                       | Minimal | 1. Awareness of theological ideas and movements that can influence individuals and local congregations |
| Ability to shepherd the local congregation: aiding in spiritual maturity; promoting use of gifts and callings; and encouraging a concern for non-Christians, both in America and worldwide. |        |                    |
| **Church/World**                                  | Strong  | 1. Interaction with many prominent non-Evangelical theologies  
2. Discusses challenges of secularism  
3. Discusses global Christianity |
| Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues. |        |                    |