**Doctrine of Scripture**

*01ST503 - RTS - Jackson * Fall Semester, 2015 * Ligon Duncan

Meeting Time: Wednesdays, 8:00 – 10:55 AM; various weeks  
Meeting Place: BS 2

**Contact Information**

TAs: Bentley Crawford – bccrawf@gmail.com  
Jonathan Hunt – jhunt2@rts.edu

Prof.: Ligon Duncan  
Office Phone: 601-923-1656

Office: Hull Administration Building  
Email: lduncan@rts.edu

**Academic Integrity**

All work submitted must be the student’s own. Group study is encouraged, but work submitted must be the student’s own (and not group-produced). Plagiarism is specifically addressed in the Student Handbook. Students who do not fulfill assignments with requisite academic integrity will be referred to the Academic Dean (the student should also consult pp. 33-34 in the Handbook for further details).

**Technology Use**

In the interests of learning, students should take notes by hand in this course. Laptop computers may not be used. Phones and other handheld devices should remain in the off position and stowed.

**Catalog Course Description**

An exegetical, historical, and dogmatic survey of the Christian doctrine of Scripture, including such topics as revelation, inspiration, authority, infallibility, inerrancy, canonicity, hermeneutics, and self-attestation. Consideration of representative contemporary formulations of these loci are included along with recent attacks on the historical Christian doctrine of Scripture.

**Expanded Description**

This course will begin by considering the priority of Scripture in Christian theology and then, working largely from Scripture, paying special attention to historic Reformed confessional statements (especially the Westminster Standards) and current debates, the biblical teaching on the knowledge of God and how this knowledge is acquired by us via divine revelation, especially through the word of God in written form (sacred scripture). We will consider at length the necessary formulations of various biblical teachings about the word of God and Scripture and the implications for how we approach, receive, and use the Bible today.

All assignments must be submitted via Canvas in pdf format. Jonathan and Bentley are both available to answer questions for you about logistical matters related to the course.

**Textbooks (Required)**


**Class Attendance**

Given the huge amount of material we have to cover and the relative scarcity of classroom hours, attendance will be at a premium and, of course, to the benefit of the student. My TA will take roll at every class. If you need to miss a class or to leave early or to arrive late, you should seek permission (via my TA, my EA, or myself). Late arrivals, failure to attend class, or to engage while in the class, will be noted. No unexplained absences.
Academic Integrity
All work submitted must be the student’s own. Group-produced work is not permitted. Plagiarism and copying of old assignments are all considered cheating. Students who do not fulfill assignments with requisite academic integrity will be referred to the Academic Dean with a recommendation for discipline (the student should also consult pp. 33-34 in the Handbook for further details).

Technology Use
Laptop computers may not be used during this course.

Assignments
1. **Précis** - Four précis (5% each: 20% of total grade) will due throughout the semester on the following topics: s.c.a.n., canon, inerrancy, and inspiration. These submissions will be made via Canvas by the due dates listed there.
2. **Exams** - A written midterm (25%) and cumulative final exam (25%) will cover course content including assigned readings and class lectures and discussions. Exams will include a variety of question types, not excluding some short answer and essay questions. **50% of total grade.**
3. **Term Paper** - Students will write a 10-12 page term paper answering one of the objections to the doctrine of Scripture listed in one of the student’s précis. The paper will integrate exegetical, systematic, and historical perspectives and sound argumentation (demonstrating a clear thesis). Chicago manual style and formatting are expected. **30% of total grade.**

Collection of Assignments
All assignments are due by 5:00 PM of the assigned day. Assignments received after this time will be considered late and penalized accordingly. Assignments are not to be emailed to the TA, but rather uploaded to the corresponding Canvas module.

Late Work
Students should make every effort to turn in work on time or early. In the rare case of medical or other providential emergency, extensions and/or alternative arrangements may be granted. In most cases, late assignments will be accepted but penalized one letter grade per day. Please make these arrangements with the TA as soon as possible.

Class Dates
Class will meet for three hours on **Wednesdays from 8:00 AM – 10:55 AM** the following dates:

Due to the amount of information for this class, it is necessary that you arrive early enough to be ready to take notes right at 8:00 am sharp.

About the Teacher
For inquiring minds who want to know, I taught full-time at RTS from June 1990- July 1996 and then became the Minister of the historic First Presbyterian Church (1837), Jackson, Mississippi in August of 1996. In 2013, I was called to serve as the Chancellor and CEO of Reformed Theological Seminary. At the beginning of 2014, I assumed that role fully as I transitioned from full-time ministry at First Presbyterian Church over to full-time leadership at RTS.

I am a native of Greenville, South Carolina, and was born and reared in a Christian home (a ninth generation Southern Presbyterian to be precise!). I am a graduate of Furman University, Greenville, SC (BA); Covenant Theological Seminary, St. Louis (MDiv, MA); and the University of Edinburgh, Scotland (PhD). I have been here in Jackson for over 25 years now.

My wife, Anne (who is a graduate of Furman University, BA; Gordon-Conwell Seminary, MRE; and Reformed Theological Seminary, MA [MFT]) was until recently the Director of Community Service at the Jackson Preparatory School, in Flowood, MS. She is an accomplished Christian Educator in her own right, and is the loving mother of our daughter, Sarah Kennedy (18), and son, Jennings (14).
Précis Assignments

A précis is a precise summary or abstract of a particular subject matter or topic. Each student must complete four, one-page précis' of 4 assigned topics: s.c.a.n., canon, inerrancy, and inspiration. These will aid you in understanding more about the doctrine as well as provide you with teaching material for the future. Please see the TA if you have any questions, uncertainties, or difficulties. These must be submitted in pdf format on Canvas. Each précis must be exactly one page with the bibliography on the second page. The format will be 11 pt., Times New Roman, ½” margins, single spaced. You must use MLA parenthetical citations such as [“by means of the covenant” (Marcel 127).] Following is an example of how your paper should be titled:

| Name          | Précis on Canon | 10/9/2015 |

Begin by outlining the doctrine. For example, you may break down S.C.A.N. to Sufficiency, Clarity, Authority, and Necessity. Then fill it in with Scripture references and supporting quotations/summaries from your research maintaining the outline format. Following are two examples of précis': one is sparse, the other is full. One is in proper format, the other is not.

**Bad**

**Good**

Suggested Resources: (in addition to required texts)


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MDiv Student Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Mini-Justification</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Articulation (oral &amp; written)</strong></td>
<td>Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, and cultural/global information, including details, concepts, and frameworks.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Scripture</strong></td>
<td>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.)</td>
<td>Strong</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Reformed Theology</strong></td>
<td>Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sanctification</strong></td>
<td>Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student’s sanctification.</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Desire for Worldview</strong></td>
<td>Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Winsomely Reformed</strong></td>
<td>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.)</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Preach</strong></td>
<td>Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
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<td><strong>Worship</strong></td>
<td>Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service.</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
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<td><strong>Shepherd</strong></td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Church/World</strong></td>
<td>Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
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