

ST 601 Covenant Theology

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Reformed Theological Seminary, Orlando
Fall 2011

I. Course description

An examination of covenant theology from exegetical, historical, and systematic theological perspectives (2 hours). This course will follow a seminar format.

II. Required readings

1. Texts to be purchased by the student

Francis Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, Volume 2 (P & R) ISBN: 9780875524528

Paul R. Williamson, *Sealed with an Oath: Covenant in God's Unfolding Purpose* (IVP) ISBN: 9780830826247

Herman Witsius, *The Economy of the Covenants Between God and Man*, 2 Vols. (Reformed Heritage Books) ISBN: 9781601780959

2. Texts on reserve in the library/available from the professor

J. Mark Beach, "The Doctrine of the Pactum Salutis in the Covenant Theology of Herman Witsius," *Mid-America Journal of Theology* 13 (2002): 101–42.

Wilhelmus à Brakel, *The Christian's Reasonable Service*, vol. 1, chap. 16

Heinrich Bullinger, *A Brief Exposition of the One and Eternal Testament or Covenant of God* (1534)

Frank Moore Cross, "Kinship and Covenant in Ancient Israel," in *From Epic to Canon: History and Literature in Ancient Israel*, chap. 1

Aaron C. Denlinger, "Robert Rollock's Catechism on God's Covenants," *Mid-America Journal of Theology* 20 (2009): 105-29

Peter J. Gentry, “Kingdom through Covenant: Humanity as the Divine Image,”

Richard A. Muller, “The Covenant of Works and the Stability of Divine Law in Seventeenth-Century Reformed Orthodoxy: A Study in the Theology of Herman Witsius and Wilhelmus a Brakel,” *Calvin Theological Journal* 29 (1994): 75–101.

Richard A. Muller, “Toward the Pactum Salutis: Locating the Origins of a Concept,” *Mid-America Journal of Theology* 18 (2007)

Richard Pratt, “God of Covenant” (<http://thirdmill.org/god-of-covenant>)

Willem van Asselt, “Covenant Theology: An Invitation to Friendship”

Willem van Asselt, “The Doctrine of Abrogations in the Federal Theology of Johannes Cocceius,” *Calvin Theological Journal* 29 (1994): 101–16.

David VanDrunen, “Natural Law and the Works Principle under Adam and Moses,” in *The Law is Not of Faith*

Cornelis Venema, “The Mosaic Covenant: A “Republication” of the Covenant of Works? A Review Article: *The Law Is Not of Faith: Essays on Works and Grace in the Mosaic Covenant*,” in *Mid-America Journal of Theology* 21 (2010)

Geerhardus Vos, “The Doctrine of the Covenant in Reformed Theology,” in *Redemptive History and Biblical Interpretation*, ed. R. B. Gaffin, Jr. (Phillipsburg: P&R Publishing, 1975), 234–67.

Johannes Wollebius, *Compendium of Christian Theology* (1626), chap. 21

III. Assignments and grading

1. Weekly seminar (30 % of final grade)

This course is structured as a seminar. Accordingly, lectures will be minimal, whereas class discussion will be maximal. In order to facilitate meaningful discussion, students will be expected: (1) to have read the assigned readings for a given week *before* they come to class that week; (2) to engage actively in class discussion of the assigned readings for that week; (3) to lead class discussion of the assigned readings from time to time (2 or 3 times during the semester). Failure with respect to any of the three aforementioned requirements will result in a deduction of points from the student’s final grade.

Please note: Given the seminar format of this course, I have kept the weekly reading assignments to a very manageable length in order to facilitate intelligent discussion of the authors' arguments.

2. Reading Report (30 % of final grade)

Students will turn in a reading report stating the percentage of the assigned readings that they have read over the course of the semester. *The reading report is due on the last day of class.*

3. Book reviews (40 % of final grade)

All students are required to write a critical book review of the following book (due October 17):

Paul R. Williamson, *Sealed with an Oath: Covenant in God's Unfolding Purpose*

Students will choose *one* of the following books and write a critical book review (due on the last day of class):

J. Mark Beach, *Christ and the Covenant: Francis Turretin's Federal Theology as a Defense of the Doctrine of Grace* (Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht)

Scott Hahn, *Kinship by Covenant: A Canonical Approach to the Fulfillment of God's Saving Promises* (Yale University Press)

Michael Horton, *Covenant and Salvation: Union with Christ* (Westminster John Knox)

I will provide detailed instructions regarding the format for the book review at a later date.

IV. Schedule of assignments

I will provide a schedule of assignments on the first day of class.


REFORMED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
 SYSTEM

Course Objectives Related to MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes

Course: Covenant Theology

Professor: Scott R. Swain

Campus: Orlando

Date: Fall 2011

<u>MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes</u>		<u>Rubric</u>	<u>Mini-Justification</u>
<p><i>In order to measure the success of the MDiv curriculum, RTS has defined the following as the intended outcomes of the student learning process. Each course contributes to these overall outcomes. This rubric shows the contribution of this course to the MDiv outcomes.</i></p> <p><i>*As the MDiv is the core degree at RTS, the MDiv rubric will be used in this syllabus.</i></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Strong ➤ Moderate ➤ Minimal ➤ None 	
Articulation (oral & written)	Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, and cultural/global information, including details, concepts, and frameworks.	Strong	Seminar format; book reviews
Scripture	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.)	Strong	Understanding covenant theology is integral to understanding Scripture
Reformed Theology	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Strong	Reformed theology is covenant theology
Sanctification	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Strong	Understanding the covenantal love of the triune God toward elect sinners incites faith and love in the triune God and a desire to glorify his most excellent name
Desire for Worldview	Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.	Moderate	Covenant is central to a Christian worldview
Winsomely Reformed	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.)	Moderate	Witsius
Preach	Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.	Moderate	Understanding covenant theology helps us interpret and apply Scripture with confidence as ministers of the new covenant
Worship	Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service.	Minimal	

Shepherd	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.	Moderate	Seminar format encourages charitable interaction with and assessment of various viewpoints, a crucial skill in pastoral ministry
Church/World	Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.	Minimal	