

## HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY II

Professor: Dr. Ryan Reeves

Office Hours: After class (or by appointment)

Class Day: Tuesdays, 9am to 12pm

Textbooks: Students will be required to read the following books:

Bruce Shelley, *Church History in Plain Language* Thomas Nelson (ISBN: 978-0-7180-25533) **Read only pp 237-440**

Bruce Gordon, *Calvin*, Yale (ISBN: 978-0-3001-20769) **Read all**

Philip Benedict, *Christ's Church Purely Reformed: a social history of Calvinism* Yale (ISBN: 978-0-3001-05070) **Read only pp 1-254**

Mark Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism: The Age of Edwards, Whitefield and the Wesleys*, IVP Academic (ISBN: 978-0-8308-38912) **Read all**

Objectives: This is a survey course to introduce the student to the history of the Christian church in the early modern and modern periods (1500-present). The course objective is to acquaint the student with the historical and theological development of key figures, movements, and doctrines. Special emphasis will be on reading the primary sources.

Course Requirements:

Exams: There will be a mid-term exam **the week of March 20<sup>th</sup>**. The exam will be taken in class (30% of your grade)

There will be a final exam at the end of semester during Exam Period (**May 21-24**) (30% of your grade)

Paper: The paper is worth 30% of your final grade. It will be 14+ pages (see below for details). It is due May 18<sup>th</sup> by 11am. It can be emailed to me: [rreeves@gordonconwell.edu](mailto:rreeves@gordonconwell.edu)

Reading: The reading report will make up 10% of your final grade and will be **reported on the final exam.**

## Paper

**GOAL:** The goal of this paper is for students to immerse themselves in the writings of one theologian or major church figure from the lectures. The essay assignment that goes along with this reading is a reflective, critical examination of the spiritual and theological substance of your reading. To be clear: I want you to graze through the writings of just one of these great Christian thinkers: I do not want this to be superficial reading assignment or an exercise in abstract thinking.

Your assignment is to engage with one figure – perhaps a reformer you always wanted to learn more about – and really pour over his devotional, biblical, and theological works. Take notes on things that inspire you, ponder things that challenge you, and question things that trouble you. Christian pastors and missionaries have read these works for centuries as part of their devotional and spiritual diet. If I can get you hooked on just one, I will have done my job!

**METHOD:** Throughout the semester, choose one figure (e.g. Jonathan Edwards). Use the resources in the library to find modern translations of his works. You may choose his sermons or several of his theological texts. You may also choose to read portions of each of these areas. I am always available to discuss

this with students (particularly if you are uncertain who to read).

You should be sure to begin with some biographical work on your source. The assigned texts for this course have short biographies of every major figure, but you may also consult other reference works that sketch historical biographies.

It is preferred that you read these works regularly throughout the semester rather than in one or several sittings. By the end of the semester, you must have read an equivalent of 325 pages in a modern edition—this amounts to 25 pages of reading a week.

**ESSAY:**

The essay will be graded 1/3 for your writing style/execution and 2/3 on the substance of your reflections. Students are to be reflective, engaging their readings in the light of scripture and the modern world.

The penalty for late papers is **one letter grade per day** that it is late, if you have not received permission from the professor to submit it late. If it is turned in at 12:01pm, then I'm afraid it will count as the "next day", and so will only receive a B or lower. Given that this paper is cumulative for the entire semester, permission for late papers will be given for only serious issues. Common colds and fatigue, I'm afraid, will not suffice!

**Course Objectives Related to MDiv\* Student Learning Outcomes**

Course: Church History 2  
 Professor: Ryan M. Reeves  
 Campus: Orlando  
 Date: Spring 2012

| <b><u>MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes</u></b>  |   | <b><u>Rubric</u></b>                          | <b><u>Mini-Justification</u></b>   |
|--|---|---|--|
| <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><br><i>*As the MDiv is the core degree at RTS, the MDiv rubric will be used in this syllabus.</i> |   | > Strong<br>> Moderate<br>> Minimal<br>> None |  |
| <b>Articulation<br/>(oral &amp; written)</b>   | Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, and cultural/global information, including details, concepts, and frameworks.   | Strong  | 1. Student submits extensive paper<br>2. Exams are heavily based on essays and written communication     |
| <b>Scripture</b>   | 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.) | Minimal                                       | 1. Showing interpretation history is a small part of the lectures.                                       |
| <b>Reformed Theology</b>   | Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.  | Strong  | 1. Discuss the Reformed tradition, its history and heritage is an extensive part of the reading/lectures |
| <b>Sanctification</b>  | Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.  | None  |  |
| <b>Desire for Worldview</b>  | Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.   | Moderate                                      | 1. Worldview is driven by our knowledge of the past  |
| <b>Winsomely Reformed</b>  | 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.)   | Minimal                                       | 1. Understanding Reformed history leads to a proper sense of being winsome with others.                  |
| <b>Preach</b>  | Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.  | None  |  |
| <b>Worship</b>   | Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service.   | None  |  |
| <b>Shepherd</b>  | 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.   | None  |  |
| <b>Church/World</b>  | Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.   | Minimal                                       | 1. Worldview is driven by our knowledge of the past  |