

**HT506 Church and the World**  
**Spring 2012**  
**Wednesday, 1 – 4 pm**

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Office Hours: Tuesday, 9 am to noon

An examination of the relationship between the church and modern culture and a survey of the history of American Presbyterianism in the past 300 years. Particular attention is given to differing Christian approaches to the relationship of Christ and culture, and to the impact of secularization and modernization on the ministry of the church.

**Course Requirements**

1. Class Attendance and Participation
2. Reading Reports (15 %)
3. Denominational Analysis Paper (35 %)
4. Technology Assignment (20 %)
5. Final Examination (30 %)

**Reading Schedule and Assignments (subject to change):**

1. *The Church Against the World* (electronically distributed; readings assigned more or less weekly)
2. Machen, *Christianity and Liberalism* (Response due: TBA)
3. Berry, *What are People For?* (Response due: TBA)
4. Hunter, *To Change the World* (Response due: TBA)
5. Technology Assignment (5-7 page paper, due: TBA)
6. Denominational analysis paper (8-10 page paper, due: May 18)

## Outline of the Course

### *Part I: Church and World (1 – 2 pm)*

#### Introduction to the Class

- I. Preliminary Notes on Culture
    - A. Pilgrimage as a Metaphor for the Christian Life
    - B. What is Culture?
    - C. What is the Church?
    - D. What is the World?
    - E. Heresies at the Intersection: Manichaeism, Gnosticism, Docetism
    - F. Common Grace and the Antithesis
  - II. Christ and Culture: “The Enduring Problem”
    - A. H. Richard Niebuhr: *Christ and Culture*
    - B. Critiques of Niebuhr
    - C. Reformed Approaches to Culture
  - III. The Contours of the Modern World: The Enlightenment & Its Effects
    - A. Liberalism
    - B. Secularization
    - C. **Modernity**
    - D. Individualism
    - E. Consumerism
  - IV. Responses to the Enlightenment
    - A. J. Gresham Machen: *Christianity and Liberalism*
    - B. Neo-Orthodoxy
    - C. Fundamentalism
    - D. Others
  - V. The Church and the Culture Wars
    - A. Battle Fronts: education, abortion, “family values,” etc.
    - B. Spiritual Warfare vs. Culture Warfare
- Conclusion
- A. David Wells on the Church in the Postmodern World
  - B. James Hunter: To Change the World

*Part II: American Presbyterian History (3 – 4 pm)*

1. Introduction: How to Spell Presbyterianism
2. What is New about the New World?
3. Colonial Presbyterianism
4. A National Church
5. The Evangelical Social Empire
6. Civil War
7. The Gilded Age and Progressive Presbyterianism
8. The Presbyterian Controversy
9. Karl Barth and the Split P's
10. The Formation of the PCA
11. Mainline Demise and Vanishing Presbyterianism
12. Conclusion: Whither Presbyterianism?

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

Course: Church and World

Professor: Muether

Campus: Orlando

Date: Spring 2012

<b><u>MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes</u></b>		<b><u>Rubric</u></b>	<b><u>Mini-Justification</u></b>
<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"> <li>➤ Strong</li> <li>➤ Moderate</li> <li>➤ Minimal</li> <li>➤ None</li> </ul>	
<b>Articulation (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.	Moderate	Papers text knowledge and articulation of course subjects
<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	Discusses use and misuse of Scripture in modern theology and contemporary church history
<b>Reformed Theology</b>	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Moderate	Discusses Reformed approaches to culture and common grace.
<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	Discusses rise of worldview thinking, benefits and limitations of worldview perspective
<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.)	Moderate	Explores where Reformed can learn from non-Reformed and non-evangelical perspectives
<b>Preach</b>	Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.	Minimal	Note challenges in communicating Christian doctrine in modern/postmodern age.
<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.	Strong	Reflections on the challenge of Christian discipleship in modern times from a variety of perspectives