ST 519 – Ecclesiology and Sacraments

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Reformed Theological Seminary, Orlando
Fall 2015

Course description

In this course we will study the doctrines of the Church and the Sacraments. We will seek to contemplate, appreciate, and apply these doctrines as they are revealed in Holy Scripture and summarized in the Reformed confessions to the end that God might be glorified “in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations” (Ephesians 3.21). (2 hours.)

Required reading

Ephesians (students are required to read Ephesians slowly and prayerfully at least four times over the course of the semester)


*The following texts are available on reserve in the library:*

John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Book IV, Chapters I-II

Martin Luther, *On the Councils and the Church*

Scott R. Swain, “Lutheran and Reformed Sacramental Theology, 17th-19th Centuries,” in Hans Boersma and Matthew Levering, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Sacramental Theology*

J. van Genderen and W. H. Velema, *Concise Reformed Dogmatics*, chap. 14

*The following texts are available from the professor:*


Michael Horton, “The Church,” in *Christian Dogmatics*
John Webster, “‘In the Society of God’: Some Principles of Ecclesiology”

Note: Other short articles and essays will be made available over the course of the semester.

Assignments

1. Ephesians report (5 % of final grade): Students are required to read Ephesians slowly and prayerfully at least four times over the course of the semester. Students will provide a reading report on the final exam indicating whether or not they have done so.

2. Reading report (20 % of final grade): Attached to the final exam, students will turn in a reading report stating the percentage of the assigned readings that they have read with reasonable care over the course of the semester.

3. Exams (60 % of final grade): Students will take two exams over the course of the semester. Exams will test students’ critical grasp of doctrinal topics covered in class lectures, readings, and the Reformed confessions as well as their ability to communicate doctrinal topics in a clear manner.

4. Paper (15 % of final grade): Students will write a short paper on one of the topics treated in the course. Papers will be evaluated based on their ability (1) to articulate a clear thesis that rests upon sound biblical and theological argumentation and that addresses the strongest counterarguments to the thesis; (2) to engage with appropriate scholarly resources (at least eight, with bibliography attached); (3) to follow the prescribed format (12-15 pages in length, double spaced, Times New Roman font, Turabian format).

Academic Policies

1. Late assignments: Apart from exceptional circumstances, I will not accept late assignments for credit.

2. Plagiarism: Plagiarism, whether intentional or unintentional, will result in a failing grade for the course.

Office hours

Please email me (sswain@rts.edu) or Ceci Helm (chelm@rts.edu) to make an appointment.
For further reading

Gregg Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers: The Doctrine of the Church*


Herman Bavinck, *Saved by Grace: The Holy Spirit’s Work in Calling and Regeneration*

G. K. Beale, *The Temple and the Church’s Mission*

J. Todd Billings, *Union with Christ: Reframing Theology and Ministry for the Church*

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together*

John Calvin, *Treatises on the Sacraments*

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church*


Peter Gentry and Stephen Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant: A Biblical-Theological Understanding of the Covenants*

Michael Goheen, *A Light to the Nations: The Missional Church and the Biblical Story*

Stanley Hauerwas and William Willimon, *Resident Aliens*

Michael Horton, *People and Place: A Covenant Ecclesiology*

Hans Küng, *The Church*

Stuart Robinson, *The Church of God as an Essential Element of the Gospel*

Thomas Schreiner and Shawn Wright, ed., *Believer’s Baptism: Sign of the New Covenant in Christ*

Timothy Tennant, *Theology in the Context of World Christianity*

Carl Trueman, *The Creedal Imperative*


Miroslav Volf, *After Our Likeness: The Church as the Image of the Trinity*

Guy Prentiss Waters, *How Jesus Runs the Church*
**Course Objectives Related to MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes**

Course: Ecclesiology and Sacraments  
Professor: Scott R. Swain  
Campus: Orlando  
Date: Fall 2015

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<tr>
<th>MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Mini-Justification</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Articulation</strong> <em>(oral &amp; written)</em></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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<td><strong>Sanctification</strong></td>
<td>Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student’s sanctification.</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
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<td><strong>Desire for Worldview</strong></td>
<td>Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
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<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>Strong</td>
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<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>Moderate</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>Moderate</td>
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<td><strong>Shepherd</strong></td>
<td>Ability to shepherd the local congregation: aiding in</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
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*As the MDiv is the core degree at RTS, the MDiv rubric will be used in this syllabus.*
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<th><strong>Church/World</strong></th>
<th>Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Biblical bases for denominational distinctives are addressed to some degree</th>
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<td><strong>Spiritual</strong></td>
<td>spiritual maturity; promoting use of gifts and callings; and encouraging a concern for non-Christians, both in America and worldwide.</td>
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<td>sacraments promotes wise pastoral ministry</td>
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