History and Theology of the Puritans

0HT702, 2 Hours

Lectures by
Douglas F. Kelly, Ph.D.
This course notebook is for the coordination of your course materials, including reading assignments and lecture recordings. Each course notebook for RTS Distance Education is arranged by the GUIDE acronym. The five components of GUIDE are organized in each lesson by the following steps in the notebook:

**GUIDE**

**Getting Started**  To do the lessons, reading and listening assignments are listed.

**Understanding**  To maximize learning, the purposes are given.

**Investigating**  To explore the content, outlines are provided for note taking.

**Developing**  To expand content, readings are suggested.

**Evaluating**  To help review, lesson questions are based on purposes.
COURSE SYLLABUS
History and Theology of the Puritans, 0HT702 2 hours
Lecturing Professor: Dr. Douglas F. Kelly
Professor of Record: David Filson
Reformed Theological Seminary, Distance Education

Lecturing Professor
Dr. Douglas F. Kelly is the J. Richard Jordon Professor of Theology at the Charlotte campus of Reformed Theological Seminary. Dr. Kelly received his B.A. from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, Diploma from the University of Lyon, his B.D. from the Union Theological Seminary, and his Ph. D. from the University of Edinburgh. He is the author of many written works including: If God Already Knows, Why Pray?; Preachers with Power: Four Stalwarts of the South; New Life in the Wasteland; Creation and Change; and The Emergence of Liberty in the Modern World. His firm grasp of multiple languages and his theological competence are capably demonstrated in translating such works as Sermons by John Calvin on II Samuel. He is serving with David Wright of the University of Edinburgh as a general editor for a revision of Calvin’s Old Testament Commentaries. Before joining the faculty at RTS, Dr. Kelly travelled extensively throughout the world preaching and teaching. He was also enlisted to serve on the Jurisprudence project of The Christian Legal Society and serves on the Credentials Committee of the Central Carolina Presbytery

Professor of Record:
David Filson, is a teaching pastor at Christ Presbyterian Church (PCA) in Nashville, and a Ph.D. student in Historical and Theological Studies at Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. Mr. Filson also serves both the Nashville Presbytery and the PCA General Assembly on the committee for theological examination.

Course Description
This course surveys the history and theology of Puritanism in England and North America during the 16th – 18th centuries. Key themes such as worship, political, education reform, and family will be explored along with an emphasis on the Puritan Regulative Principle. Several leading figures of the Puritan movement and their theology are explained including John Owen, Richard Sibbes, Thomas Goodwin, and Jonathan Edwards.

Course Objectives
• To examine the historical and political context that sparked the Puritan movement
• To survey generally the Puritan theology on scripture, ecclesiology, the home, education, and politics
• To explore the individual theology of John Owen, Richard Sibbes, Thomas Goodwin, and Jonathan Edwards
• To describe the Puritan theology of the Regulative Principle
Required Textbooks


Online Student Handbook

The Online Student Handbook has been designed to assist you in successfully navigating the Distance Education experience, whether you are taking a single course or pursuing a certificate or degree program. In it you will find valuable information, step-by-step instructions, study helps, and essential forms to guide you through every aspect of your distance education opportunity from registration to graduation. Please use this resource as your first-stop reference manual. You will find it located at the RTS Distance Education website (www.rts.edu/distance) under the Student Services tab.

Summary of Requirements

- Listen to all recorded lectures
- Complete all required Readings
- Participate in Professor and Student Forum Discussions
- Answer the Five Topical Discussion Questions
- Take the Midterm Exam
- Take the Final Exam
- Write the Course Paper
- Complete Mentor Report / Course Application Paper

Forum Discussions (15%)

The student is required to interact in **two** (2) forums:

1. Student-Professor Posts (15 total posts)
   - A. Personal Introduction Forum: The student is required to post a brief personal introduction to the professor/class. Suggested details include your vocation, where you live, your church background, why you chose RTS, and what you hope to gain through the course (1 required post).
   - B. 5 Topical Discussion Q&A Forums: The student is required to answer each topical discussion question with one (1) response. The professor will acknowledge the student’s answer and will follow up with a subsequent question to which the student must also answer with one (1) response. Each topical discussion question therefore requires two (2) total posts/responses from the student (Total of 5 forums x 2 posts =10 total posts).
   - C. Student-Professor Forum: The student is required to post four (4) times in this forum. Posts in this forum should focus on course-related content such as research paper topics, lectures and reading assignments, or other academic issues related to the course.

2. Student-Student Forum (5 total posts)
   - A post may be either a new topic or a response to an already existing topic.
**Examinations (Midterm: 15%, Final: 15%)**

The midterm exam will cover lessons 1-3. The final exam will cover lessons 4-8. The format of each exam will be 25 multiple-choice questions and 2 essay question based on the lectures and readings of the first half of the course. The student should use the Lesson Questions at the end of each lesson in preparation and study for the exam. The student will have two hours to complete each exam.

The midterm and final exams for this course are to be taken online in the Learning Management System (LMS). Please note that you will need to have a proctor for your exams. Your proctor can be anyone except a relative or current RTS Student. After clicking on the exam link you will be given detailed instructions about the exam. Please read these instructions carefully before entering the exam.

**Paper Outline and Bibliography (5%)**

The student will write and submit a two-page proposal that describes their topic, outline, and preliminary bibliography for their research paper. The first page should include a one-paragraph description of your topic and a beginning outline for your paper. The second page should be a preliminary bibliography and include a minimum of five books, essays, or journal articles; giving full biographic information for each source (author, publisher, date, etc.) This is to be submitted in the online classroom in week two of the course.

**Research Paper (35%)**

The student will write a serious 12-15 page research paper (12 pt. font and double spaced) formatted according to Turabian style having single spaced footnotes (not endnotes), and a properly formatted bibliography at the end. The student must interact with and site at a minimum five primary sources, five secondary sources, and three journal articles.

It is highly recommended that the student:

- View the Reading and Writing Tips videos before starting their research paper. These videos can be accessed on the course home page by clicking on the light bulb icon labeled Tips.
- Read the Research Paper Formatting Guide document found under Modules in the Course Resources Section.
- Access the Research Paper Helps page found under Modules in the Course Resources Section.
- Use the Historical Theology Sample Paper as a guide for formatting and writing with a clear thesis. This can be found under Modules in the Course Resources Section.
- Discuss with the Professor of Record (by phone, forums, video conference, etc.) their paper topic prior to writing, as the professor of record will be able to guide the student in their writing and help with recommending resources. (For further help with tracking down and acquiring resources please contact the Distance Education librarian David Ponter. His contact information can be found in the Research Paper Helps page.)

Please choose from one of the topics below:

1. Discuss and explore the Puritan treatment of the conscience, interacting with Richard Sibbes’ Bruised Reed and William Bridge’s A Lifting Up for the Downcast.
2. Examine and interact with Thomas Goodwin’s Christology.
4. Explore the Trinitarian theological program of John Owen in its pastoral and polemic settings. How does the Trinity function soteriologically, as well as, in reaction to the Socinianizing tendencies of his day. What are the contemporary benefits of Owen’s Trinitarian theology for the church today?
5. Explore John Owen’s treatment of the Priestly office of Christ in his magisterial commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews, sermons, and theological treatises.
6. Provide a theological analysis of John Bunyan’s Pilgrim’s Progress.
7. Explore the historical development of Covenant Theology in the Post-Reformation period, paying special attention to Puritan treatment of the Covenants of Redemption, Works, and Grace.
8. Explore the Calvin vs. the Calvinists Theory, interacting with the Muller thesis on continuity and discontinuity.
10. Explore the debate over passive and active obedience at the Westminster Assembly.

Required Reading (10%)

The student must complete all of the required reading. Reading assignments are broken down week by week within the LMS. As an assignment, the student will be asked to report the percentage of reading they have completed by submitting a reading report with their Name, Course name, End date, and percentage of reading completed.

Mentor Report/Course Application Paper (5%)

Each Global/Non-Residential student is required to have a mentor submit a report at the end of the course. This report will contribute to 5% of the student’s grade. For students who are not Global/Non-Residential, you are asked to write a 200 word summary of how you perceive what you have learned in this course will fit into the objectives you have for your ministry, your educational goals, or other objectives you wish to achieve in life.

Assignments

Best practice for your time management is for you to submit all assignments at the end of the week in which they fall, using the upload links provided in the LMS. All work must be submitted by midnight of the course end date, per your course start letter. You are responsible for turning in all assignments on time; no late submissions are permitted. Any student who needs an extension must get approval from the Registrar prior to that time.

Contact Information

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Web site: www.rts.edu/distance
Lesson One:  
Background, Influence, and Theology of the Puritans

Lesson Two:  
Richard Sibbes’s Life, Theology, and Puritan Mysticism

Lesson Three:  
Puritans on Immediate Communion with God

Lesson Four:  
John Owen on the Works of the Holy Spirit and Believers’ Union with Christ

Lesson Five:  
John Owen on Sanctification, Vivification, and Mortification

Lesson Six:  
The Life and Theology of Thomas Goodwin

Lesson Seven:  
Jonathan Edwards on Revivalism and Beauty

Lesson Eight:  
The Puritan Regulative Principle
Note: The student is not required to read any of the below, but may find it useful in research for the course paper or for further independent study.


Rutherford, Samuel. *Lex Rex*.


### MAR Student Learning Outcomes

In order to measure the success of the MAR 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 MAR outcomes.

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| 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 | 1. Integrative research paper based on primary sources and specific beliefs of individual theologians  
2. Short essay exams test knowledge and articulation of course topics  
3. In-depth analysis of important theology in the Puritan movement  
4. Biographical studies of key figures in the Puritan movement |
| 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.) | Minimal | 1. Discusses Puritans use of scripture to reform the church |
| Reformed Theology | Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards. | Strong | 1. Provides history of Puritan movement and its positive influence on the Westminster Standards and Reformed theology  
2. Examines how the Puritan movement gave rise to the Westminster Standards  
3. Emphasis on Puritan theology reforming the church from heretical doctrines  
4. Specific Puritan theologies contrasted with confessional Reformed views of God, the work of the Holy Spirit, sin, worship, etc. |
| Sanctification | Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student’s sanctification. | Moderate | 1. Evaluation of various Puritan theologians doctrine on God, with specific emphasis on the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer  
2. Detailed analysis of John Owen’s theology of sanctification, vivification, and mortification. |
| Desire for Worldview | Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God. | Moderate | 1. Emphasis on the Puritan movement to conform the church to Scriptural standards  
2. Examination of the Puritan goal to reform all of life in light of Scripture |
| Winsomely Reformed/ Evangelistic | 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 | 1. Explores Puritan theologians interaction with non-Reformed Christians  
2. Examines the distinctions and nuances of the Regulative Principle in worship as taught by the Puritans and other Christian groups |
| Teach | Ability to teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm. | Minimal | 1. Highlights Puritan interpretation of scripture |
| Church/World | Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues. | Minimal | 1. Examination of the Puritan influence on the broader global church |
| MAR Specific SLO | An ability to integrate such knowledge and understanding into one’s own calling in society | Minimal | 1. Awareness of theological and philosophical ideas that can influence personal beliefs and church doctrines |