ST 517 Christology, Soteriology, Eschatology
Dr. Michael Allen
Spring 2015
Thursday 1:00-4:00

Course Description

This course explores the doctrines of Scripture from a systematic perspective. Topics include Christology, Soteriology, and Eschatology.

The Learning Objectives

Comprehension
- To increase your knowledge of Christology, the doctrine of Christ’s person
- To increase your knowledge of Soteriology, the doctrine of Christ’s work for us
- To increase your knowledge of Eschatology, the doctrine of our hope in the gospel

Competence
- To sharpen your ability to read, think, and write about systematic theology with clarity and perception
- To sharpen your ability to think synthetically about how various theological topics relate to one another

Character
- To grow in your faith, better appreciating the glory of the gospel
- To grow in your hope, more perceptively longing for the return of Christ
- To grow in your love, reflecting the generosity of God back to others

The Instructor

Michael Allen, Ph.D.
Email: mallen@rts.edu
Phone: 407-278-4445

Note: feel free to contact me whenever needed (preferably via email). When in doubt about protocol or processing, write and ask. We can set up meetings as needed.

The Texts

The following books are required:


Supplementary PDF readings will be available on Canvas and will be required on various weeks.

**The Assignments**

The student is required to complete the following three assignments in whole:

1. **Reading**

   Reading must be completed before each class meets. Class discussions will focus on readings, so you must be prepared to talk.

   Theology is an activity done largely through the process of good reading. Read carefully. Read charitably. Read with others. Read with the expectation that you will learn from others, even when you disagree with their main point. Read even when a text is dense and difficult, for you will learn perseverance and fortitude here. Read that which seems trite and obvious, asking how others might object or criticize. Most importantly, read because God was willing to reveal himself in written words, and because we can best witness to God’s grace with corresponding words. Read because words matter in God’s economy of grace.

   Remember: reading is an active exercise, a conversation in which you participate.

2. **Reading Briefs**

   Students are expected to prepare a brief on each chapter read (except during the final two weeks, which will be discussed in class). The purpose of the brief is to summarize the thesis, outline, and argument of that chapter, as well as to state one’s own analysis of it (in the form of questions, confirmations, objections, etc.). Briefs may include quotations from various points in the chapter (so long as page numbers are referenced).

   Briefs should be no more than 350 words.

   Briefs are to be submitted in hard copy. Bring them to class.

3. **Final Research Paper**
Students will write a research paper on one topic discussed in class readings or lectures. The student will demonstrate familiarity with major literature and will show competence in dealing fairly with that material. The paper should be 2000-2500 words.

Final papers are due by midnight on May 13 via email.

Rules for Final Paper

Final papers will be docked for poor grammar and style. Edit carefully. Read and re-read what you have written. Ministry involves communication, so you should hone your speech even as you learn theological substance.

Note: I highly recommend that you read your paper backwards, sentence by sentence. This will force you to see that each sentence has a subject and predicate, that they they agree, etc.

Do not go over the word limit for any written assignments. I assign a particular length to be followed by all. A good thinker will have more information than can be said in the limit, but a good writer will be able to distill and shorten.

Note: I will stop reading your work when it reaches the word limit. If you keep going, I will toss this out and read your paper as if it has no conclusion (something which will certainly lower your grade).

All written assignments are to be emailed to the instructor in MSWord or PDF format. You will receive email confirmation that they have been received.

Academic Honesty (adapted from Dr. Timothy Phillips of Wheaton College)

1. The assignments are designed to extend and deepen your comprehension and appreciation of Christian theology and to increase your facility with theological method. The processes of defining a topic, researching the results of others' studies, critiquing those studies, and organizing your conclusions in a clear and cogent presentation provides valuable skills for your various leadership ministries. The use of sources is an essential step in appropriating the learning of the Church's tradition in its relationship to cultures to help us understand and faithfully practice Scripture.

2. Using information obtained from a source without indicating it (whether by footnote, parentheses, or bibliography or some other appropriate reference, depending on the type of assignment) is plagiarism (intellectual thievery and lying). This applies to any information that you gain from someone that is not “common knowledge.” It does not apply only to exact quotations or precise verbal allusions. Altering the wording does not remove the obligation to acknowledge the source.
3. Cheating is the presentation of someone else’s work, which the student ought to have done personally. This includes submitting answers to test questions derived by some means other than that intended by the instructor. It also includes turning in written assignments composed in whole or in part by someone else.

4. Cheating or plagiarism results in the immediate failure of the entire course. Further disciplinary action may be taken as well.

Computer Policy (Modified from Dr. Alan Jacobs of Baylor University)

Computers, tablets, and smart-phones are not allowed in class. Think I’m over-reacting? Think you’re a master of multitasking? You are not. No, I really mean it. How many times do I have to tell you? Notes taken by hand are almost always more useful than typed notes, because more thoughtful selectivity goes into them; plus there are multiple cognitive benefits to writing by hand. And people who use laptops in class see their grades decline — and even contribute to lowering the grades of other people.

The Grading Structure

Grades are apportioned as follows:

Reading and Reading Briefs 1/2
Final Paper 1/2

Grades may be adjusted based on issues regarding attendance and participation in class.

The Schedule (with some key themes noted)

February 4
The Covenant of Grace
Read Bavinck, vol. 3, ch. 5

February 11
The Incarnation (1)
Read Bavinck, vol. 3, ch. 6

February 18
The Incarnation (2)
Read Cyril, On the Unity of Christ

February 25
Humiliation (1)
Read Bavinck, vol. 3, ch. 7

March 3
Humiliation (2): The Atonement
Read J. I. Packer, “What Did the Cross Achieve? The Logic of Penal Substitution”

March 10
Exaltation
Read Bavinck, vol. 3, ch. 8

March 17
Election and Union with Christ
Read Bavinck, vol. 3, ch. 9

March 24
NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK

March 31
Justification (1)
Read Bavinck, vol. 4, chs. 1-2

April 7
Justification (2)
Read Bavinck, vol. 4, ch. 3

April 14
Sanctification (1)
Read Bavinck, vol. 4, ch. 4

April 21
Sanctification (2)
Read John Webster, “The Holiness of the Christian”

April 28
Eschatology

May 5
Eschatology
Read Bavinck, vol. 4, chs. 15-18

May 13
Final paper due via email
**MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes**

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.

*As the MDiv is the core degree at RTS, the MDiv rubric will be used in this syllabus.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Mini-Justification</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Weekly writing requirements develop ability to gather appropriate content and communicate it in a clear and compelling manner.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Focuses on broad, canonical teaching of Holy Scripture upon certain fundamental doctrinal topics, as they develop exegetically.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minimal</td>
<td>Topics of Christology, Soteriology, and Eschatology introduced as taught in Reformed tradition. Analysis of relevant WCF chapters.</td>
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<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>Direct study of sanctification in residential week, focusing on Christ’s agency in maturing Christians in the present tense.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Articulation (oral &amp; written)</th>
<th><strong>Rubric</strong></th>
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<tr>
<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>
<td>Weekly writing requirements develop ability to gather appropriate content and communicate it in a clear and compelling manner.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Scripture</th>
<th><strong>Rubric</strong></th>
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<tr>
<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>
<td>Focuses on broad, canonical teaching of Holy Scripture upon certain fundamental doctrinal topics, as they develop exegetically.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Reformed Theology</th>
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<tr>
<td>Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Topics of Christology, Soteriology, and Eschatology introduced as taught in Reformed tradition. Analysis of relevant WCF chapters.</td>
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<th>Sanctification</th>
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<td>Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student’s sanctification.</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
<td>Direct study of sanctification in residential week, focusing on Christ’s agency in maturing Christians in the present tense.</td>
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<th>Desire for Worldview</th>
<th><strong>Rubric</strong></th>
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<td>Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Develops systematic and coherent framework for interpreting all of life in a biblical, Reformed manner.</td>
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<th>Winsomely Reformed</th>
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<tr>
<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>
<td>Introduces many classical precursors to Reformed theology, noting the way in which the Reformation was a modification or renewal movement within classical Christianity rather than its repudiation or replacement, as well as contributions made by later traditions other than the Reformed.</td>
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<th>Preach</th>
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<td>Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
<td>Macro-understanding of whole counsel of God developed so exposition of any text can be done with a greater sense of breadth, emphasis, and proportion.</td>
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<th>Worship</th>
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<td>Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service.</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
<td>Macro-understanding of whole counsel of God developed so development of liturgy (whether fixed or free) can be done with a greater sense of breadth, emphasis, and proportion.</td>
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<td>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.</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
<td>Focus upon application of salvation enables student to consider regular means of grace and normal course of Christian discipleship in light of the gospel promises.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Church/Worl d</td>
<td>Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
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