Course Description

This course is a study of Ecclesiology and the Sacraments (Baptism and the Lord’s Supper). We must understand and appreciate the nature of the church and the grace of the sacraments if we are to be faithful ministers of Christ’s kingdom in the world. Our theology of the church and the sacraments importantly shapes what it means for Christians to be in the world, not of the world, but for the world.

“When we, the church, are confused about who we are and whose we are, we can become anything and anyone’s.” (John G. Stackhouse, preface to Evangelical Ecclesiology: Reality or Illusion)

“God directs his people not simply to worship but to sing his praises “before the nations.” We are called not simply to communicate the gospel to nonbelievers; we must also intentionally celebrate the gospel before them.” (Tim Keller, Center Church: Doing Balanced, Gospel-Centered Ministry in Your City)

Required Readings

John Calvin, The Institutes of the Christian Religion (Book IV, Chapters 14-17).

Edmund Clowney, The Church (all).

Michael W. Goheen, A Light to the Nations: The Missional Church and the Biblical Story (all).

Leonard J. Vander Zee, Christ, Baptism, and the Lord’s Supper: Recovering the Sacraments for Evangelical Worship (all).

Westminster Confession of Faith (Chapters XXV-XXXI)

Suggested Readings


Steven Cowan, Ed., Who Runs the Church?: 4 Views on Church Government.


Timothy Keller, *Center Church.*

Keith A. Mathison, *Given for You: Reclaiming Calvin’s Doctrine of the Lord’s Supper.*

Michael J. Svigel, *Retro-Christianity: Reclaiming the Forgotten Faith.*

**Course Evaluation**

Reading (10%)  
Students will indicate on their final exam the percentage of the assigned readings that they have read with reasonable care and thoughtful reflection.

Class Conversations (10%)  
Participation in class discussions is highly valued and strongly encouraged.

Class Presentation (15%)  
Students will provide a one-page outline and present a 10min argument.

Reflection Paper (25%)  
Students will write a theological reflection paper on an assigned topic. Further details will be provided on the first day of class.

Final Exam (40%)  
The examination will test the student's knowledge of the material covered in both the course lectures and in the required readings and allow students to opportunity to demonstrate a mastery of how the materials apply in various ministry situations.
### 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.

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<tr>
<th>MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Mini-Justification</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Articulation (oral &amp; written)</strong></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 spiritual maturity; promoting use of gifts and callings; and encouraging a concern for non-Christians, both in America and worldwide.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Church/World</strong></td>
<td>Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
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