ST508: Systematic Theology I. 3 hours

Meeting Time: Tuesdays, 9:00 AM – 11:55 AM; Aug 22 – Dec 4

Fall, 2012

Contact Information
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Office: DC Email: bbaugus@rts.edu

TA: Zach Garris

Catalog Course Description
This survey of theology emphasizes the practical applications of the doctrines to the ministry of the gospel in contemporary culture. Topics include theology proper (God) and anthropology (humanity).

Explanation
At Jackson we assume that students in ST1 have already completed (or are at least presently taking) Covenant Theology and Doctrine of Scripture (covering theological prolegomena) in theology and Hebrew and Greek in Biblical Studies. We also assume that all students in this section are either M.Div. students or intentionally taking a course in that degree program. Given these assumptions, we are free to focus our attention in this course on (1) presenting a systematic statement of the biblical teaching on the topics of God and humanity as understood and taught within the Reformed tradition, demonstrating that these formulations represent (2) the correct understanding of Scripture and (3) the doctrine God’s people need to thrive as disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. My goals in this course correspond to our focus: that at the conclusion of this course you are (1a) properly prepared for pastoral ministry in an orthodox Reformed or Presbyterian church on the topics covered in this course, confident in (2a) the biblical foundation and (3a) practical usefulness of the Reformed understanding of God and humanity.

Textbooks (Required)

Note: the campus bookstore will be selling complete sets (all 4 vols.) at a deep discount.


(Recommended)
Basic Resource: Richard A. Muller, *Dictionary and Latin and Greek Theological Terms* (Baker)
Companions: Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, new ed. (Eerdmans)
Dabney, *Systematic Theology* (Banner of Truth)
Fine Tuning: Richard A. Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics*, vols. 3 & 4 (Baker)
Francis Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, vols. 1 & 2 (P&R)

Assignments

Exams
There will two exams in this course: a midterm and a final. Both the midterm and the final will include an in-class, objective portion and a take-home, essay portion. (Students will be given the essay questions several weeks in advance and submit that portion of the exam when they sit for the in-class portion.) Each essay question should be answered with a concise and well-written essay of about five paragraphs. The take-home portion is open note and book, but NOT the in-class portion. You must do your own work on all portions and not discuss answers with other students until after the due date for each exam.

Book Review
A five page critique of Miroslav Volf, *Allah: A Christian Response*, from an orthodox Reformed perspective is due with your term paper. Your review should be measured in tone and display a serious engagement with Volf’s various lines of argument.

Term Paper
Students will also write a 10-12 page term paper on an approved issue under the doctrines of God and humanity that integrates exegetical, systematic, and historical perspectives and sound argumentation.
(demonstrating a clear thesis). Proper style and formatting are expected (see latest edition of Turabian). Papers ought to be error-free, and reflect quality research and careful, critical thinking.

Course Grade

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exams</td>
<td>12.5% each; 50% combined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book Review</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term Paper</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
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Course Outline & Schedule

Each subtopic will be (1) defined by and argued for from Scripture, (2) shown to be the true or best understanding of the church as reflected in her confessions and creeds and taught by her best teachers, (3) isolated from and defended against various errors and accusations of current interest, and (4) practically applied.

[Introduction to Class] .................................................................................................................. Aug 28

Doctrine of God

I. Being and Attributes
   A. God as Hidden and Revealed
      1. Incomprehensibility and Ineffability
      2. Theology Proper as Descriptive
   *B. Biblical Names of God .............................................................................................................. (Oct 2)
      1. OT (Hebrew & Aramaic)
      2. NT (Greek)
   C. Attributes of God ........................................................................................................... Sept 4
      1. Incommunicable Attributes
      2. Communicable Attributes .......................................................................................... Sept 11

II. Persons (Trinity) ..................................................................................................................... Sept 18
   *A. Biblical Revelation of the Trinity (OT and NT) .................................................................... (Oct 2)
   B. Definition
      1. Orthodox Formula: Statement and Historical Background
      2. Terms (Being, Essence, & Substance; Person, Hypostasis, & Subsistence)
      3. Mystery and Paradox in Theology: Limits of Analogies ............................................... Sept 25
   C. One-ness and Three-ness of God
      1. Father
      2. Son
      3. Holy Spirit

[Fall Reading Week] ..................................................................................................................... Oct 9

[Midterm Exam] ........................................................................................................................ Oct 16

III. Works ....................................................................................................................................... Oct 23
   A. Basic Distinctions and Principles
      1. Of God’s Will
         a. Necessary (voluntas necessaria) & Free (voluntas libera)
         b. Decretive: Absolute & Ordained
         c. Hidden (Effecting and Permitting) & Revealed (Prescribing: legal and evangelical)
      2. Of God’s Works
         a. Essential and Personal
         b. Internal (ad intra) and External (ad extra)
         c. Indivisibility of ad extra works of God (opera Trinitatis ad extra sunt indivisa)
B. Decree
   1. Attributes: Free, Eternal, Absolute, Immutable, and Unconditional
   2. General (Providence) and Special (Predestination)
   3. Order: Supra-infra debate, Molinism and Middle Knowledge

C. Creation
   1. Ex Nihilo: Created Order, Creatureliness, Days of Creation
   2. Goodness of God and of Creation
   3. Freedom of God and Contingency of Creation
   4. Eternity & Time; Teleology & Eschatology
   5. Creation of Angels (& Humanity, see below)

D. Providence

   1. General, Special, and Extraordinary (Miracles)
   2. Preservation & Government
   3. Concurrence
      a. God’s Relation to the World (Pantheism, Penentheism, Deism Excluded)
      b. Divine Foreknowledge, Human Freedom, and Secondary Causes

Doctrine of Humanity

I. As Created
   A. As a Creature
      1. Human Nature and Place in Created Order
      2. Existence and Origin of the Soul: Denials, Creationism, and Traducianism
      3. Freedom & Finitude
   B. Adam and Eve
      1. Historicity (Evolution, Comparative Genetics)
      2. In God’s Image
      3. Creation Mandates
      4. In Covenant with God

   II. As Fallen
   A. Origin of Sin/Evil
      1. Evil and the Decree
      2. Fall of Satan and Adam
   B. Possibility of Fall & and the Nature of Temptation
   C. Biblical Account of the Fall
      1. Tree of Life and Knowledge of Good and Evil
      2. Command, Warning, and Transgression
      3. Curse and the Created Order
      4. Death (many forms of)
   D. Original Sin & Human Condition

   [Final Exam]
## Course Objectives Related to MDiv Student Learning Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MDiv Student Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Mini-Justification</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Articulation (oral &amp; written)</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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scripture</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>Reformed Theology</td>
<td>Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sanctification</td>
<td>Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student’s sanctification.</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Desire for Worldview</td>
<td>Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Winsomely Reformed</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>Moderate</td>
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<td>Preach</td>
<td>Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
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<td>Worship</td>
<td>Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service.</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
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<td>Shepherd</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>Minimal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Church/World</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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