Course Description

In 1544, Emperor Charles V called for the Diet of the Holy Roman Empire to meet at Speyer. Martin Bucer, Strassburg reformer, urged Calvin to write a statement of the doctrines and necessity for the Reformation. What emerged was Calvin’s *The Necessity for Reforming the Church*, a book which Calvin’s friend and successor, Theodore Beza, thought the most powerful and important book of his time. What was Calvin’s chief concern? Worship!

This course will investigate as many of the issues of worship as time will permit. The canvas is vast: what does the Bible teach about worship? How are we to integrate both Old and New Testament materials for the church today? What does church history teach us? What are the issues facing the church today?

But what does the latest RTS Catalog say?

The biblical foundations of worship, including music, worship strategies, creative styles, and worship for special occasions, are considered in this course. The goal is to prepare students to be worshippers and effective leaders in worship.

The two instructors have attempted to divide the materials in such a way that duplication is avoided. However, given the nature of this course, some overlap is unavoidable. Dr. Wymond will concentrate on the history of worship and focus on the specific issues of music. He will also cover the practical issues of weddings and funerals.

Course Objectives

1. To acquaint the student with the relevant materials of biblical and historical debate on worship
2. To facilitate the student to become a leader of worship that is both dignified and sensitive to current cultural norms
3. To engage the student in debate over issues currently of major controversy within the Reformed churches

Contact Information

Professors: Rev. William K. Wymond, DMin  
Rev. J. Ligon Duncan III, PhD  
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Executive Assistant: Jan Hyde  
*If you would like discuss matters related to this course or future ministry, please contact my assistant to set up an appointment.*

Honors Scholars Teaching Assistants  
Kevin Phipps – kevinp@fpcjackson.org  
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Academic Integrity
All work submitted must be the student’s own. Group-produced work is not permitted. Plagiarism and copying of old assignments are considered cheating. Students who do not fulfill assignments with requisite academic integrity will be referred to the Academic Dean with a recommendation for discipline (the student should also consult pp. 33-34 in the Handbook for further details).

Class Methodology
A. Lectures and Attendance
Many of these sessions will be in the form of seminars, to facilitate classroom discussion. Attendance, therefore, is an absolute requirement. Given the huge amount of material we have to cover and the relative scarcity of classroom hours, attendance will be at a premium and, of course, to the benefit of the student. My TA will take roll at every class. If you need to miss a class or to leave early or to arrive late, you should seek permission (via my TA, my EA or myself). Failure to attend class, or to engage while in the class, will be noted. No unexplained absences.

B. Reading Assignments
1. Required Texts:
   Robert Vasholz *Benedictions* Christian Focus Publications, 2007
   ______ *Calls to Worship*, Christian Focus, 2008

2. Recommended
   Terry Johnson, *Leading in Worship* Covenant Foundation.
C. Practical Requirement (60%)

1. **Written Prayers.** (20%)

   The practice of extemporary praying is a good one and one for which our Puritan and Presbyterian forefathers fought hard to maintain. But even these traditions called for what they termed “studied prayers”: prayers that had been planned and thought through and then delivered without notes. **Please follow this format exactly:** Font size 10, Times New Roman, single spaced. One page exactly (no more, no less). Prayers are due each week to the TA’s mailbox before the start of class.

   In addition to a written prayer, on another page give me a paragraph explaining what it is you hope to accomplish in this prayer. Is it thematic?  Is it based on some texts of Scripture? Please **staple** this page to your prayer.

   **How should I go about writing these prayers? (from Derek Thomas)**

   I suggest you take a Psalm and meditate on it. Then begin to formulate the ideas and word structures of the psalm, adapting them for suitability in 20\textsuperscript{th} century parlance. Follow the order of thought in the psalm where appropriate. Grading someone’s prayers poses some problems. Still, a measure of objectivity will be attempted. Grading will depend on such things as style, wording, biblical content, structure.

   Although I haven’t made these required texts, I do recommend that you purchase the following books to help you in public prayer. They will prove to be invaluable to most of you.


2. **Order of Service/Bulletin** (20%)

   The Student will create six complete Worship Bulletins/orders of service. One bulletin for each of the following service types is to be submitted:

   1.) Funeral
   2.) Lord’s Supper
   3.) Baptism
   4.) Profession of Faith
   5.) Wedding
   6.) Regular Lord’s Day morning/evening services.

   A “Worship Guide” is also expected for each worship order of service. In the guide you will explain the reasons you structured the service the way you did, include reference to historical Presbyterian worship, scriptural basis, elements vs. forms and circumstances, etc. Be sure to integrate your worship order, structure, hymn selection, and texts. If you choose to disagree with the philosophy of worship articulated in this course, you must provide a full justification for that in your “worship guide.”
3. **Short Essays (20%)**

   In order to assist you in your own preparation for ordination, ministry, and life, as well as to provide a meaningful outlet for interaction with the materials, philosophies, and issues in this course each student will submit the following three essays:

   1. Compare and contrast the historic “Regulative Principle of Worship” with other philosophies of worship. The student will include the history, key proponents, biblical basis, and difficulties of each view.
   2. Discuss the use and views of church liturgy, the “church calendar,” and “contextualization” from a biblical as well as historical-theological standpoint. The student will be sure to include benefits and difficulties with various understandings and practices.

   The best essays will include copious use of scripture, theologians, and creedal statements. Be sure to make reference to and interact with both the lectures and assigned readings for this course.

   **Format:** Please submit your essays using standard formatting (Size 12, Times New Roman, one-inch margins); essays are not to exceed three *single spaced* pages.

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**Collection of Assignments**

Unless otherwise noted, all assignments are due **at the beginning of class**. Assignments received after this time will be considered late and penalized accordingly. Assignments are **not** to be emailed to the TA, but rather physical copies should be submitted.

**Late Work**

Students should make every effort to turn in work on time or early. In the rare case of medical or other providential emergency, extensions and/or alternative arrangements may be granted. In most cases, late assignments will be accepted but penalized one letter grade per day. Please make these arrangements with the TA as soon as possible.

**D. Comprehensive Final Exam (40%)**

The final exam will cover the lecture and reading material in a comprehensive way. Students can expect to be asked both factual and integrative questions. **Students can expect to be asked examination questions on all of the reading material.**
Course Outline and Assignment Schedule

Listed below are the dates and topics and weekly assignment timetable/due dates for our course. Please factor these into to your term calendar now!

Due Dates Summary
All assignments are due at the beginning of class. Assignments received after this time will be considered late and penalized accordingly. Assignments are not to be emailed to the TA, but rather physical copies should be submitted.

February 3  
GPTG, 17-106;

February 10  
GPTG, 107-169; D&F, all;

February 17  
GPTG, 170-287;

February 24  
GPTG, pp. 375-436; Old, 1-90;

March 3  
GPTG, 289-374; Old, 91-177;

March 10  
No Class today — Spring Break

March 24  
AHK, 11-135;

March 31  
AHK, 136-249;

Essay 1 Due: Compare and contrast the historic “Regulative Principle of Worship” with other philosophies of worship. The student will include the history, key proponents, biblical basis, and difficulties of each view.

April 14  
Essay 2 Due: Discuss the use and views of church liturgy, the “church calendar” and “contextualization” from a biblical as well as historical-theological standpoint. The student will be sure to include benefits and difficulties with various understandings and practices.

April 21  
Bulletins (Order of Service) due:
1.) Funeral
2.) Lord’s Supper
3.) Baptism
4.) Profession of Faith
5.) Wedding
6.) Regular Lord’s Day morning/evening services.

April 28  
Essay 3 Due: Describe in sufficient detail your own theology of public worship