2ST504, History of Philosophy and Christian Thought

Course Handbook

RTS/Orlando, Spring Term, 2012

Meetings

Wednesdays, 8-10 AM, 11-12 AM.

Instructor

John M. Frame

My stated office hours this term are Tuesdays, 8-11 AM, others by appointment. I'm in my office most mornings, and if my door is ajar I'll be happy to see you. Feel free to write me at jframe@rts.edu. I will probably give a better answer to your question by email than in person, but I realize that sometimes face-to-face meetings are better.

Teaching Assistant

Louis Schieferdecker, mirrorimage1018@gmail.com. Louis is also available to help you. He will be evaluating your written assignments and will be available to help you prepare for exams.

Objectives

1. To inform students about the main thinkers in the history of philosophy, Reformed theology, and liberal theology.
2. To show the interaction of philosophy and theology, especially the influence of philosophy on our theological formulations.
3. To illumine the spiritual warfare that takes place in the intellectual movements of human history.
4. To give students critical tools to evaluate, not only thinkers of past history, but future thinkers as well.

Assignments

1. Regular attendance, preparation of assigned material each day for discussion. Students who are often late, absent, or unprepared may be
penalized. At present I don’t expect to have a lot of discussion in class, but if you ask questions they should be well-informed.

2. One paper of roughly 3000 words, due Fri., May 18, at 11 AM. Put it in the bin marked with our course name in the area near the Administrative Assistants.
   a. Choose some thinker discussed in this course.
   b. Read some of the thinker's own works, plus some secondary sources, both assigned and unassigned.
   c. Describe and explain briefly one of his distinctive theses (one for which he is known in distinction from other thinkers).
   d. Note one or more of his main arguments for that thesis.
   e. Evaluate those arguments.
   f. Compare his position with that of Reformed Christian Theism.

3. First MidTerm Exam, March 19-24: covering the first six assignments (through the assignment of March 14). The exam will be given in the library. You can go there to take it any time between its opening Mon., Mar. 19 to its closing Sat., March 24. You are responsible to know the library’s opening and closing hours.

4. Second Mid Term Exam, Apr. 16-21: same format as the first. Covers all assignments of March 21 through April 11. Take it in the library between its opening April 9 to its closing April 14.

5. Final Exam: covering the assignments from that of Apr. 18 to the end of the course. It will be given during the official exam period, at a place to be announced by the Seminary.

N. B.: In your preparation for the exams, do not make use of any exam used for this course in an earlier year. If you do, it will be considered cheating, for which RTS applies draconian penalties.

Grading

Individual assignments 1-5 will be graded on a pass-fail basis. Your final grade will be calculated as follows:

Passing work on all five assignments—A.
Passing work on four of five assignments—B.
Passing work on three of five assignments—C.
Passing work on two of five assignments—D.
Passing work on one or no assignment—F.
Required Texts

Papers by Frame and Edgar can be found at www.reformedperspectives.org. Click on “Hall of Frame,” then this course.


Edgar, “No News is Good News”

Frame, “Certainty”
   -- “Christianity and Contemporary Epistemology”
   -- “God and Biblical Language”
   -- “Greeks Bearing Gifts”
   -- “Infinite Series”
   -- “Ontological Argument”
   -- “Transcendental Arguments”
   -- “Van Til Reconsidered”


Recommended, Supplementary Texts

Andrew Hoffecker, ed., *Revolutions in Worldview* (Phillipsburg: P&R, 2007). An excellent survey of worldviews from the Greek philosophers to the present. My “Greeks Bearing Gifts” is included. Other contributors include present and former RTS professors and other well-known Reformed scholars like Vern Poythress, Peter Leithart, Carl Trueman, Richard Lints.


Samuel Enoch Stumpf, *Socrates to Sartre and Beyond: A History of Philosophy* (NY: McGraw-Hill, 2003). Dr. MacKenzie used this book as his main text. Excellent, detailed account. I have thought that it is perhaps too technical for most seminarians, but I could be wrong.

Course Schedule

This schedule indicates roughly how the readings correlate with the lectures. I will not test you on them during the week, but it would be good for you
to have completed the readings in order better to follow the lectures. I will not usually discuss the readings in class. They will cover some thinkers I may not mention in class. Mastering these texts is your responsibility. The final exam will cover both lectures and readings.

All dates are Wednesdays.

**Feb. 8: Introduction; Early Greek Philosophy**

Lecture Outline (henceforth LO), 1-8.
Frame, “Greeks Bearing Gifts”
Palmer (henceforth P), 1-51.

**Feb. 15: Mature Greek Philosophy**

LO, 9-14.
Allen and Springsted (henceforth AS), 1-82.
P, 52-108.

**Feb. 22: Early Christian Thought**

LO, 14-22.

**Feb. 29: Augustine and Medieval Christian Thought**

LO, 23-34
AS, 83-110
Frame, “Ontological Argument”
---“Infinite Series”

**Mar. 7: Early Modern Thought: Secular**

LO, 35-39.
AS, 111-171.
Frame, “Certainty.”

**Mar. 14: Early Modern Thought: Christian**

LO, 39-49.
**MAR. 19-24: FIRST MIDTERM:** Covering lectures and readings through the assignment of Mar. 14. Take it in the Library any time from opening Monday, Mar. 19, till closing Saturday, Mar. 24. You are responsible to find when the library is open.

**Mar. 21: Early Liberal Theology; Kant and His Successors**

LO, 49-64.
AS, 172-218, 228-247.
P, 235-304.

**Mar. 28: Spring Break; No Class**

**Apr. 4: Nineteenth Century Theology**

LO, 64-83.
AS, 219-228.

**Apr. 11: Phenomenology, Pragmatism, Existentialism**

LO, 84-93
AS, 248-262.

**Apr. 16-21: SECOND MIDTERM:** Covering lectures and readings assigned through the assignment of April 4. Take it in the library any time from its opening Monday, 4/16, to its closing Saturday, 4/21. You are responsible to determine when the library is open.

**Apr. 18: Theology, 1920-1950**

LO, 93-146.

**Apr. 25: From Hermeneutics to Postmodernism; Theology 1950-2000**

LO, 146-185
AS, 263-280
Edgar, “No News is Good News”
P, 384-416.

May 2: Process Thought, Open Theism, Narrative Theology

LO, 185-222

May 9: Language Analysis

LO, 223-237.
AS, 281-303.
Frame, “God and Biblical Language.”
“Christianity and Contemporary Epistemology.”
P, 318-359.

May 16: Recent Reformed Philosophy

LO, 237-end.
Frame, “Transcendental Arguments.”
--, “Van Til Reconsidered.”

Bibliography

Histories of Philosophy (Western), Reference Works, and Primary Sources

Copleston, Frederick, A History of Philosophy (Garden City:

Descartes, Rene, A Discourse on Method and Selected Writings (NY: Dutton, 1951).


Ewing, A. C., A Short Commentary on Kant's Critique of Pure Reason (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1938, 1974).


Habermas, Jürgen, Knowledge and Human Interests (Boston: Beacon Press, 1972).


Anti-Christian.


Leibniz, G. W., Selections (NY: Scribner's, 1951).


Palmer, Donald, Looking at Philosophy (Mountain View: Mayfield, 1988). A simple, but very competent exposition.

Pascal, Blaise, Pensees (NY: Dutton, 1956).


Singer was a historian of Reformed convictions.

Spinoza, Selections (NY: Scribner's, 1930).


Thiselton, Anthony C., The Two Horizons (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980).


Wild, John, Existence and the World of Freedom (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-
Hall, 1965).

Oriental Philosophy


Recent Philosophy of Religion

Flew, Antony, and MacIntyre, Alasdair, New Essays in Philosophical Theology (London: SCM Press, 1955, 1958). 274. H. This volume was one of the earliest collections of essays representing the modern analytic approach to philosophy of religion.
Hamilton, Kenneth, Words and the Word (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971). 2.95. 119. P.
--, The Varieties of Belief (NY: Humanities Press, 1973). 189. H. Helm is one of the few Calvinists among contemporary analytic philosophers.
Lotze, Hermann, Outlines of the Philosophy of Religion (Boston: Ginn and Co., 1903). 162. H.
--, An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion (NY: St. Martin’s Press, 1982). 218. H.
--, Warrant (3 vols.)
-- same, second ed., 161. →

History of Modern Theology, Critical Analyses

229. H.

155. p.

184. p.


Fuller, Daniel P., Easter Faith and History (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965). 4.95. 279. h.


Grenz, Stanley, and Olson, Roger, Twentieth Century Theology (Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity Press, 1992.) 393. h. One of the more recent evangelical discussions. I'm much less impressed with it than most reviewers have been. Contrary to Grenz and Olson, the problems of twentieth-century theology are far greater than a mere imbalance between transcendence and immanence.


Hamilton, Kenneth, God is Dead (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1966).
1.25. 86. p.
-- , The System and the Gospel (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1963). 2.45. 249. P. Hamilton is an evangelical, somewhat influenced by Kierkegaard. This is his critique of Tillich.


Klooster, Fred, The Significance of Barth's Theology (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1961). 2.95. H. Klooster taught at Calvin Seminary for many years. Quite orthodox, a nephew of Cornelius Van Til.


Niebuhr, Richard R., Resurrection and Historical Reason (NY: Scribner's, 1957). 3.95. 184. H. Excellent critique of Barth and Bultmann, as far as it goes.


Polman, A. D. R., Barth (Phila.: P&R, 1960). 1.50. 68. P.


Major Works of Modern Theologians, Readings in Modern Theology


Baillie, John, The Idea of Revelation in Recent Thought (NY: Columbia UP, 1956). 151. p. Surveys views of Barth, Brunner, Tillich and others. He seems to agree with all of them!

Barth, Karl, Church Dogmatics (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, from 1936). Many volumes.
1.95. 152. p. Roman Catholic writer, accepts all the new, modern stuff.
Recent thinker in the Dutch Reformed tradition.
179. p. Liberationism.
A friend of Bultmann, rather to Bultmann's left! He demythologizes God, too.
17.95. 374. p.


--, God as the Mystery of the World (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983). 414. h. Jungel is a contemporary German theologian, fairly reminiscent of Barth, but trying to move ahead.


--, The Necessity of Faith (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976). 2.95. 159. P.


Mollenkott, Virginia R., Sensuous Spirituality (NY: Crossroad, 1993). Mollenkott was known as an evangelical for many years. Now known as a lesbian apologist for feminist theology.


Neville, Robert C., Creativity and God (NY: Seabury, 1980).
Neville wants his fellow process thinkers to develop a more credible doctrine of creation. Highly complex and confusing.


Pinnock, Clark, ed., The Openness of God (Downers Grove: IVP, 1994).

Professing evangelical argues new “open theism,” a God who doesn’t know the future.

-- and Brow, Robert C., Unbounded Love (Downers Grove: IVP, 1994). A more systematic presentation of the above viewpoint.


Anglican bishop caused quite a furor with this book.


“Reformed Epistemology”

Anderson, James, “If Knowledge Then God: The Epistemological Theistic Arguments of Plantinga and Van Til,” forthcoming.
Clark, Kelly James, Return to Reason (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990). An apologetic based on Plantinga’s “Reformed Epistemology.”
--, articles in Steve Cowan, ed., Five Views of Apologetics (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000). Note the interchanges between Clark and Frame, and with the other authors.

Recent Epistemology of Religion

Clouser, Roy, Knowing with the Heart (Downers Grove: IVP, 1999).
---, The Possibility of Religious Knowledge (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971).
Helm, Paul, Belief Policies (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1994). Frame’s review is in your SD.


--, God, Freedom, and Evil (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974). These titles were published before Plantinga developed his “Reformed epistemology,” but he considers them still valid as providing supplementary argumentation for the rationality of Christian belief.


Postmodernism


Grenz, Stanley J., A Primer on Postmodernism (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996). Probably the best general introduction to the subject, but I would be more critical of the postmodern movement.

Gunton, Colin, The One, the Three, and the Many: God, Creation, and the
Culture of Modernity (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).
Lundin, Roger, The Culture of Interpretation (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993).
Lyotard, Jean-Francois, The Postmodern Condition (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1984).
McCallum, Dennis, ed., The Death of Truth (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 1996).
Postmodernism.
Middleton, J. Richard, and Walsh, Brian J., Truth is Stranger than it Used to Be (Downers Grove: IVP, 1995). Christians who are more friendly than most toward some postmodern ideas.
Taylor, Mark, Deconstructing Theology (NY: Crossroad, 1982).
Tilley, John, Postmodern Theologies (NY: Orbis, 1994).

*Course Objectives Related to MDiv Student Learning Outcomes*

Course: 2ST504, History of Philosophy and Christian Thought
Professor: John M. Frame
Campus: Orlando, FL
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MDiv Student Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Mini-Justification</th>
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<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>Moderate</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>Moderate</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sanctification</strong></td>
<td>Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student’s sanctification.</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Desire for Worldview</strong></td>
<td>Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<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>
</tr>
<tr>
<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>
</tr>
<tr>
<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>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<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>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<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>Moderate</td>
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