Handouts available online before class each Monday:

They will be downloadable via

https://selfservice.rts.edu/Home.aspx
THEOLOGY – RTS stands within a distinctive strain of evangelical Christian theology. We are committed 100% to the authority of the Bible and its message of God’s lordship, control, and presence. One course goal is that you come to appreciate the contours of a robustly biblical Reformed theology.

COMMUNITY – We believe that there are no “Lone Ranger” Christians, that Christian theology is learned from community and in community. We believe that one of the most important factors in your ability to sustain ministry over the course of a lifetime will be the relationships that you carry through your ministry. One course goal is to afford you the opportunity to step into just such potentially

CHARACTER – We believe that theology is done with heart and hands as well as with the mind. We believe that questions about God necessarily lead to questions about ourselves. One course goal is to invite you to consider, through the lens of the “seven deadly sins” and their counterparts in Jesus’s beatitudes, what is happening in your own faith journey.

WORLDVIEW – We share with historic Christianity a sense that we are called to take the saving message of Jesus Christ to the ends of the earth. Historically Reformed communities have also had a distinct posture towards questions of “grace” versus “nature” or of “the sacred” versus “the secular.” One course goal is to familiarize you with the conversations within “the Reformed camp” about how best to ask the so-called “Christ and culture” question.

WORSHIP – The God of the Bible is known only in worship. We believe that Christian theology is necessarily, therefore, (among other things) a sung and prayed theology. One course goal is to give you the opportunity to develop worship as a “habit of the heart” – to wit, to grow in your love for the Lord and to honor him with your worship as you learn from his Word.
REQUIRED RESOURCES


Grading

10% Reading/Viewing
20% Deference Construct Project: (4,000 words max; due Wed. Dec. 4, by 11:00 a.m.) Details to follow
20% Midterm Exam (take home; due at start of class Mon. Oct. 15)
25% Final Exam (take home; due Tues. Dec. 10, 4:00 p.m.)
25% Small Group (weekly participation – “My Story” paper, Guinness discussion, course material)

Reading/Viewing: On the final exam, you will indicate what percentage of the reading/viewing you have accomplished during the semester.

Deference Construct Project. Details to follow.

Take Home Midterm Exam: Combination of objective and essay questions. The focus will be on lectures and on all readings assigned through Week 6. (We’ll provide sample questions to aid your preparation.)

Take Home Final Exam: Combination of objective and essay questions. The essay portion of the exam will be cumulative, but the objective portion will cover lectures and readings since the midterm.

On the essay portion you should expect to be asked to compare “Great Church Christianity” (Athanasius & Lewis) and “Great Reformation Christianity” (Calvin & Allen). You should be able to identify and assess the offerings of each expression of the faith for answering various challenges arising in the emerging postmodern world (per Webber).
• We know that truth is personal — it is as much “caught” as “taught.”

• We believe your spiritual life is desperately important.

• We have learned from experience that 5, 10, 20, & 30 years from now, friendships you make here & now will be as significant as anything else in sustaining you in ministry.

• We ask you, therefore, to participate in a small group experience beginning Week 3.

• Groups will meet during the last hour of class — attendance is mandatory.

• Read the assigned material in Os Guinness, *Steering Through Chaos* (as assigned) and participate in your group’s discussion about the seven deadly sins and the beatitudes.

• **Reflection Paper: “My Story”:** Initial course readings cover “God’s Narrative” (Webber), the Psalms’ story (Kidd and Athanasius), and David’s story (Kidd); moreover, in *With One Voice* (ch. 2) Kidd tells his own story of coming to faith in Christ and struggling to balance truth, goodness, and joy. With those readings as backdrop, would you please write a paper telling your own story, interacting with the thoughts from the reading & lectures. Guiding questions: What is your story? Where have you been? Where do you see yourself going? Where do you see yourself now? Are your struggles with God’s Authority (Truth), with God’s Control (Goodness), God’s Presence (Beauty/Feelings)? This paper should be around **1000 words**, written in 1st person. The purpose of the assignment is: a) to allow the professor and your sempai to get to know you better; b) to allow you to practice expressing yourself in written form; and c) to provide you an opportunity to receive feedback on your writing (no grade, just feedback). We are looking for honest reflection and a well-written, grammatically proper paper.

• Your sempai will help you process the lectures and readings, and give you feedback on your writing projects.

• Your sempai will help you as much as you will allow in establishing good devotion and study habits.
NORMATIVE PERSPECTIVE

ORTHOPISTIA

GOD AS AUTHORITY

THE BIBLE: A DIVINE-HUMAN REVELATION
SCRIPTURE AS A “PICTURE” OF WHAT WE’RE CALLED UPON TO BELIEVE

Premise: What we know affects what we do and what we feel.
Guiding Question: What am I called upon to believe & understand, that I may better obey and love?

Disciplines:
- Biblical Exegesis: Literary and hermeneutically informed analysis of Scripture;
- Systematic Theology: Reading Scripture as an “FAQ” that answers our questions about personal application;
- Biblical Theology: Reading Scripture as a “Script” that tells us about our role in his redemptive design for creation.

NORMATIVE OVERVIEW

- Faith as “keeping the commandments.”
- The uniqueness of Scripture … its double authorship, and the implications thereof … the Christological analogy
- The Cone of Certainty & the Hermeneutical Spiral: “If truth is a Web of Multiple Reciprocities, the best we can hope for is momentary synchronicity.” — Richard Pratt … learning to think Binary (truth as propositional) and Analog (truth as personal)
- Exegetical Craftsmanship: Scripture’s Forms (propositions, commands, questions, promises, threats, complaints, praises); Scriptures’ Contexts (word, sentence, paragraph, writer, genre, testament, whole)
- Biblical Theology — story-responsiveness — the perspectival relation between the normative and the situational
- Systematic Theology — application-orientation — the perspectival relation between the normative and the existential.

KEEPING GOD’S COMMANDMENTS

1 CORINTHIANS 7:19

Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but what matters is …

“In your light we see light”
Ps 36:9
EXISTENTIAL OVERVIEW

• 1Tim 1:5 — “The goal of our instruction is love” — Gal 5:6 — what counts is “faith working through love”
• “I can expect seminary to be a dry time for me spiritually.” — Buy or Sell?
• Calvin’s Institutes 1.1 — the perspectival relation between knowledge of God and of self
• Lex orandi, lex credendi — “The law of praying is the law of believing” (i.e., “Show me how you pray and I’ll show you what you believe.”)
• Lex canendi, lex credendi — “The law of singing is the law of believing” (i.e., “Learn to praise. Understanding will follow.” — R. Kidd)
• Exploring John Frame’s dictum: “Theology is application.” … Heb 5:14, “… who because of practice have their senses trained to discern …”
• How our spiritual gifts and calling factor in our theology.
• Developing a hermeneutic of charity toward myself: how my likes & dislikes can make me a better pastor-theologian-counselor.
• Developing a hermeneutic of suspicion toward myself: how my likes and dislikes can make me a worse pastor-theologian-counselor.
• Regenerate vs. unregenerate thinking (e.g., Albert Schweitzer) — it’s not just about balance.
• Caveat Emptor (“Buyer beware”) — Why do they call us “The Chosen Frozen?”

ORTHOPATHOS

• GOD AS PRESENT

SCRYPTURE AS A “MIRROR” IN WHICH I LEARN TO READ MYSELF

Premise: What we feel affects how we know and how we act.
Guiding Question: What is God doing in me that I may better understand his Word and purposes in this world of his?
Disciplines:
• Personal Devotions: Worship, prayer …
• Sanctification: Learning to find our satisfaction in knowing the dynamic of union with Christ
• Counseling: Applying “common grace” and “special revelation” insights to matters of the heart

EXISTENTIAL PERSPECTIVE

GALATIANS 5:6
SITUATIONAL OVERVIEW

• History of Redemption … the Kingdom of God … “the already & the not yet” … we’re a community of hope.
• A community of hope: 1Tm 3:15, The church as God’s “plausibility structure” … Lose touch with Christian fellowship, and lose sight of Christian truth.
• Ecc 4:9-12, Community’s power to protect (even from yourself).
• 1Co 8 & 10; Rom 14, The hermeneutical significance of disagreement.
  • The relation between “Mere Christianity” and “Salvation Belongs to the Lord” — the relation between Nicea/Chalcedon and Westminster/Heidelberg
  • A community of hope — Reformed distinctives — e.g., Lordship of God; view of humankind (the depth of depravity & the height of glory); covenantal continuity; the TULIP; the Solas; common grace; worldview (“every thought captive,” “plant the banner”); theology of vocation; regulative principle (in theology & worship); view of “real presence”; view of sanctification (Luther, Calvin, Wesley, Charismatic); end-times options
• 2 Caveats Emptores — Machen’s “Warrior Children” & Max Weber’s “Iron Cage”

“IN THE TOTAL EXPANSE OF HUMAN LIFE THERE IS NOT A SQUARE INCH OF WHICH THE CHRIST, WHO ALONE IS SOVEREIGN, DOES NOT DECLARE, ‘THAT IS MINE!’”
* Abraham Kuyper
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATES</th>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>READING DUE (BEFORE CLASS!)</th>
<th>ASSIGNMENTS DUE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Aug 27</td>
<td>Course Intro</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 2 Sept 3 | Doing Theology with Head & Heart & Hands | Pratt, Lessons 1 & 2  
Webber, Intro.  
Athanasius, pp. 3-24, 97-120 (Intro, Life, & Psalms) | Small groups start |
| 3 Sept 10 | The Great Narrative: Israel | Guinness: “Intro”  
Kidd, Chs. 3-4 • David & Psalm 22  
Webber, Ch. 1, “God’s Narrative”  
C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, Bk I  
Athanasius, Chs. I-II (§§ 1-10), pp. 25-37 | |
Kidd, Chs. 5-6 • Jesus’s Songs of Lament and Victory Chant  
C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, Bk II  
| 5 Sept 24 | The Great Church, Pt. 1 | Guinness: “One: Pride,” Pt. 2, pp. 53-70  
Webber, Chs. 2-3 • The Church Emerges and Shapes Culture  
C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, Bk III  
Athanasius, Chs. V-VI (§§ 26-40), pp. 56-75 | |
C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, Bk IV  
Athanasius, Chs VII-IX (§§ 41-57), pp. 75-96  
Calvin, Bk 1, pp. 1-32 (Knowing God & Ourselves)  
| 7 Oct 15 | The Great Reformation, Pt. 1 | Guinness: “Two: Envy,” Pt. 2, pp. 91-113  
Calvin, Bk. 2, pp. 33-64 (Our Sin & God’s Response)  
Allen, Ch. 3, “God & Christ” | Take Home Midterm Due |
Calvin, Bk. 3.1-3.10, pp. 65-92 (Receiving the Benefits)  
Allen, Ch. 4, “Faith & Salvation” | |
| 9 Oct 29 | The Great Reformation, Pt. 3 | Pratt, Lesson 3  
Guinness: “Four: Sloth”  
Calvin, Bk. 3.11-3.25, pp. 92-123 (The Mystery of Election)  
Allen, Ch. 5, “Sin & Grace” | |
| 10 Nov 5 | A Great Mission & a Biblical Worldview, Pt. 1 | Pratt, Lesson 4  
Guinness: “Five: Avarice”  
Webber, Ch. 4, “How the West Lost God’s Narrative”  
Calvin, Bk. 4.1-4.13, pp. 124-144 (The Church)  
Allen, Ch. 7, “Confessions & Authority” (Normative) | |
| 11 Nov 12 | A Great Mission..., Pt. 2 | Guinness: “Six: Gluttony”  
Webber, Ch. 5, “Our Postmodern, Post-Christian, Neopagan World”  
Calvin, Bk. 4.14-4.19, pp. 145-162 (The Sacraments)  
Allen, Ch. 6, “Worship” (Existential) | |
| 12 Nov 19 | A Great Mission..., Pt. 3 | Guinness: “Seven: Lust”  
Webber, Ch. 6, “New Contenders Arise to Narrate the World”  
Calvin, Bk. 4.20, pp. 163-173 (Civil Government)  
Allen, Ch. 8 & Concl., “Culture & Eschatology” (Situational) | |
| 13 Nov 26 | A Great Mission..., Pt. 4 | Guinness, “Conclusion: Five Reminders”  
Webber, Ch. 7, “A Call to Narrate the World Christianly” | |
| Dec. 4 | | | Deference Construct Project Due *11:00 a.m.* |
| Dec. 10 | | | Take Home Final Exam Due: Tues. Dec. 10, 4:00 p.m. (Last Day of Exams) |
# Course Objectives Related to 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>Mini-Justiceification</th>
<th>Rubric</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to the scope of the seminary curriculum.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overview of concerns of biblical theology; introduction to tools of exegesis; biblical languages not required.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overview of history of emergence of the Reformed communities; introduction to the contours of Reformed theology</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study of the “Seven Deadly Sins” and the Beatitudes, via Guinness book and in small groups</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emphasis on origins and content of Reformed worldview.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on the Reformed communities relationships with the rest of Christ’s church</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to Reformed philosophy of worship; assignments encouraging personal and corporate worship</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The whole course is aimed at forming good shepherds!</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignments that involve students in ministry outside the class.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Rubric</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Articulation (oral &amp; written)</strong></td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scripture</strong></td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reformed Theology</strong></td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sanctification</strong></td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student’s sanctification.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Desire for Worldview</strong></td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Winsomely Reformed</strong></td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Preach</strong></td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Worship</strong></td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shepherd</strong></td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Church/World</strong></td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>