Course Description

An evaluation of the rise and significance of the Puritans in the 17th century, primarily within the English context. A brief historical setting will lead to an examination of some of the central and significant issues in theology that characterised their ministry and writings. The course will give special emphasis on the nature of experiential religion, a singular characteristic of puritan writings.

Course Objectives

To introduce students to the wealth of puritan literature. To cultivate an interest in further study in the puritans. To highlight some major contributions in the areas of experiential theology that remain deeply significant for the church today. To engage in an in-depth study of some of the key areas of puritan theology, particularly where they impact current theological trends within Reformed theology.

Course requirements

Required Texts

Joel Beeke, Assurance of Faith (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1999)

J. I. Packer, A Quest for Godliness (Wheaton: Crossway, 1990)

Kapic, Kelly, Justin Taylor (eds.) John Owen, Overcoming Sin and Temptation (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2006)

Fischer, Edward The marrow of Modern Divinity (Fear, Ross-shire: Christian Focus, 2009)

Supplementary Reading List of original sources for research purposes

In addition to the collected writings of the major puritans: **John Owen, Richard Sibbes, Thomas Manton, Stephen Charnock,** and **John Flavel** the following shorter writings should be considered:


*The following paperback editions of smaller writings by some of main puritans are an accessible entry point into Puritan literature:*

**Puritan Portrait Series/ Christian Focus Publications**

Packer, J.I. *Puritan Portraits* (2012)

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________ *Heaven on Earth* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1961)
Supplementary Reading List of secondary sources for research purposes

Joel Beeke, Puritan Evangelism (Reformation Heritage Books, 1999)

________, A Reader’s Guide to Reformed Literature: an annotated bibliography of Reformed Theology (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 1999). This is the most comprehensive and
reliable guide available. It covers all major reprints of puritan works up to 1999.

F. J. Bremer, The Puritan Experiment (New York, 1976)


P. Christianson, Reformers and Babylon (Toronto, 1978)


P. Collinson, English Puritanism (Historical Association pamphlet, London, 1983)


______ From Puritanism to the age of reason: a study of changes in religious thought within the Church of England, 1660 to 1700 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1950)


William Haller, The Rise of Puritanism, or, The Way to the New Jerusalem

as set forth in pulpit and press from Thomas Cartwright to John Lilburne and John Milton, 1570-1643 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1965 [1938]). *This is still the best introduction to the history of Puritanism in England. Haller is chiefly interested in Milton and literature and studies Puritanism for that sake. The reader will find little concern about theology or godliness.*


E. B. Holifield, The Covenant Sealed (New Haven, CT, 1974)


Daniel Neal, *The History of the Puritans* (1732-1738) (Minneapolis: Klock & Klock Christian Publishers, 1979 [1837])


K. L. Sprung, *The Learned Dr William Ames* (Urbana, IL, 1972)

J. B. Torrance, *Calvin and Puritanism in England and Scotland:*
some basic concepts in the development of “federal theology” (South Africa, mid 1980’s?, nd). This is Torrance’s cause célèbre, which he has consistently argued for the past 30 years, as did (does) his father, T. F. Torrance

Peter Toon, Puritans and Calvinism (Seoul, Korea: Westminster Publishig House, 1972). Toon is an Anglican and his chapter on the Westminster Confession (‘high Calvinism’ according to Toon) is irritattingly simplistic and patronising. A good overview, though.

D. D. Wallace, Puritans and Predestination (Chapel Hill, NC, 1982)


G. Yule, Puritans in Conflict (Appleford, 1981)

D. Zaret, The Heavenly Contract: Ideology and Organisation in Pre-Revolutionary Puritanism (Chicago, IL, 1985)
Evaluation

A three-page book report on each of the required texts for this course (20%)

Write a 20-page research paper evaluating one particular feature of Puritan theology. The paper should include a knowledge of several puritan sources as well as reference to secondary material. (80%)

Instructions for Turning in Coursework

Complete coursework is due by MAY 9, 2014

All coursework, including exams, must be compiled into no more than 1 or 2 documents, either WORD or PDF. Please, NO zip files.

Files should be emailed to dwhtcoursework@gmail.com (If you have questions relating the course, use dthomas@rts.edu).

Files sent without clear identification of their author (i.e. YOU) on every page (by way of a header/footer will result in audible gasps in Columbia, SC and may be subject to penalty!)
#1. THE SUPRALAPSARIAN CONTROVERSY

Puritan Theology of Grace and Salvation: From Calvin to Perkins - a road to supralapsarianism?

Some definitions:

**Infralapsarianism:**
1. the decree to create the world and (all) men
2. the decree that (all) men would fall
3. the election of some fallen men to salvation in Christ (and the reprobation of the others)
4. the decree to redeem the elect by the cross work of Christ
5. the decree to apply Christ’s redemptive benefits to the elect

Note: the discriminating decree comes immediately after the lapsarian decree

**Supralapsarianism:**
1. the election of some men to salvation in Christ (and the reprobation of others)
2. the decree to create the world and both kinds of men
3. the decree that all men would fall
4. the decree to redeem the elect, who are now sinners, by the cross work of Christ
5. the decree to apply Christ’s redemptive benefits to these elect sinners

[This view held by Theodore Beza, William Perkins, Franciscus Gomarus, Gisbertus Voetius, William Twisse]

OR

1. the election of some men to salvation in Christ (and the reprobation of others)
2. the decree to apply Christ’s redemptive benefits to these elect sinners
3. the decree to redeem the elect, who are now sinners, by the cross work of Christ
4. the decree that all men would fall
5. the decree to create the world and men

[This view held by Jerome Zanchius, Johannes Piscator, Herman Hoeksema, Gordon Clark]

Note: the discriminating decree comes before the lapsarian decree
Amyraldianism

1. the decree to create the world and (all) men
2. the decree that (all) men would fall
3. the decree to redeem (all) men by the cross work of Christ
4. the election of some fallen men to salvation in Christ (and the reprobation of others)
5. the decree to apply Christ’s redemptive benefits to the elect

Note: the discriminating decree comes immediately after the decree to redeem men (and therefore sometimes called “post-redemptionism”) and immediately before the decree to apply Christ’s redemptive benefits (hence its name “ante-applicationsim”).

#2. ASSURANCE AND THE SYLLOGISMUS PRACTICUS

A logical construction used by the Reformed tradition in order to establish the certainty of election in and for an individual. Stated bluntly, it seems to rest certainty of election in the outward fruits of faith. The problem is that may lead to a basing of salvation on outward works, clearly in violation of the principle of grace.


Quisquis vere credit et reipiscit electus sit; Atqui ego credo; Ergo electus sum
“Whoever truly believes and repents is elected; now I believe, therefore I am elected.”

Major premise: Whoever truly believes and repents is elected
Minor premise: now I believe
Conclusion: therefore I am elected
#3 PURITAN TIME-LINE

1526  William Tyndale’s English NT reaches England

1536  Henry VIII and the English Parliament separate the Church of England from Rome

1547  Edward VI becomes king. The Protestant Reformation in England advances dramatically.

1553  Mary, RC, becomes Queen. 300 English Protestants are martyred, and 800 flee to the Continent, where they imbibe the Continental Reformation doctrines.

1558  Queen Elizabeth 1 accedes to the throne and establishes the Elizabethan Compromise, which isn’t enough to satisfy the Puritans.

1559  The Act of Uniformity authorizes the Anglican Prayer Book for Worship and lays down penalties for those who refuse to use it or speak out against it.

1567-1568  A vestments controversy of long standing reaches its peak in C of E.
1569-1570  Thomas Cartwright, professor at Cambridge, upsets Anglican establishment (and loses his position) with the lectures on the first two chapters of Acts, in which he argues for a Presbyterian form of Church government.

1583  John Whitgift becomes Archbishop of Canterbury and enforces conformity to the ceremonies of the Anglican Church, leading to oppression of puritan non-conformists.

1603  Death of Elizabeth; accession of James I
1604  Hampton Court Conference

1611  Authorised Version of the Bible

1618  The Book of Sports (encouraging sports on Sunday afternoons) is first published (renewed in 1633). Cited by 17th century historian Thomas Fuller as one of the leading causes of the Civil War.

1620  Pilgrims to Plymouth Colony, Massachusetts on the ‘Mayflower’

1625  Death of James I; accession of Charles I

1628  William Laud becomes bishop of London (Archbishop in 1633)
May: Petition of Right
Founding of Massachusetts Bay Colony at Salem
1629 March: Dissolution of Parliament by Charles I
1630 John Winthrop leads the first large body of puritans to Massachusetts Bay
1633 William Laud made Archbishop of Canterbury
1636 Harvard College is founded
1637 Imposition of Prayer Book on Church of Scotland
1638 February 28: Signing of National Covenant
November-December: General Assembly of Glasgow
1639 First Bishops War
1640 April: Short Parliament
Second Bishops War; Scottish Army matches into England
September: *Et Cetera* Oath
November 3: Long Parliament opens (curtailing the power of the king)
1641 October: ‘Irish Massacres’
November 27: Parliament passes Grand Remonstrance
1642 August 22: Charles I raises standard at Nottingham
October 23: Battle of Edgehill
1643 June 12: Ordinance passed by Parliament for calling Assembly of Divines
July 1: Assembly convenes
August 17: Solemn League and Covenant approved by Scottish Parliament
September 25: Solemn league and Covenant subscribed by members of Assembly
and Parliament and Scottish Commissioners
October 12: End of revision of Thirty-Nine Articles
October 17: ‘Church Government’ under discussion
1644 May 24: Report and debate on ‘Directory of Public Worship’
July 2: Battle of Marston Moor
August 20: Committee appointed on ‘Confession of Faith’
November 8: ‘Form of Church Government’ sent to Parliament
December 9: Self-Denying Ordinance proposed
1645 January 3: ‘Directory for Public Worship’ passes House of Commons
January 23: Resolution passed by House of Commons containing substance of
Presbyterianism
June 14: Battle of Naseby
July 7: Assembly sends up ‘Directory for Church Government’
1646 April 27: Charles I escapes Scots at Newark
April 30: Committee from House of Commons with Jus Divinum Queries
December 4: ‘Confession of Faith’ presented to Parliament
1647 April 26: Scripture proofs for ‘Confession’ given to Parliament
August 6: Army marches into London
August 27: ‘Confession’ approved by Church of Scotland
October 15: ‘Larger Catechism’ completed
November 11: Charles I flees, ending up at Carisbrooke Castle, Isle of Wight
November 25: ‘Shorter Catechism’ presented to House of Commons

1648 April 14: Catechisms presented in final form
April 30: Outbreak of Second Civil War
August 17: Battle of Preston
December 6: Pride’s Purge of Parliament

1649 January 20: Trial of Charles I opens
January 30: Execution of Charles I
February 22: Last numbered Plenary Session of Assembly
September 11: Battle of Drogheda

1650 September 3: Battle of Dunbar

1651 September 3: Battle of Worcester

1652 March 25: End of Assembly’s work of sitting as a committee to examine candidates for the ministry

1653 April 20: Dissolution of ‘Rump’ of Long Parliament
July: Inception of ‘Barebones’ (or Nominated) Parliament
December 16: Oliver Cromwell becomes Protector

1657 May 8: Cromwell rejects kingship
June 26: Cromwell installed as Lord Protector

1658 September 3: Death of Oliver Cromwell

1660 Restoration of Charles II

1662 August 24: Act of Uniformity excludes Nonconformists from Church of England

1669 First Indulgence of Charles II

1672 Second Indulgence of Charles II

1685 Charles II becomes Roman Catholic on deathbed; accession of his Roman Catholic brother, James II

1688 James II flees from ‘Glorious Revolution’; accession of William III and Mary

1689 Act of Toleration
## Course Objectives Related to MDiv/MA Student Learning Outcomes

**With Mini-Justification**

**Course:** Puritan Theology Elective  
**Professor:** Derek W. H. Thomas  (RTS Atlanta)  
**Campus:** Orlando  
**Date:** Spring 2014

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<thead>
<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>STRONG</strong></td>
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<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>Strong</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Reformed Theology</strong></td>
<td>Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.</td>
<td><strong>STRONG</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><strong>STRONG</strong></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>MODERATE</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Winsomely Reformed/Evangelistic</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>STRONG</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><strong>MODERATE</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Worship</strong></td>
<td>Knowledgeable of historic and modern worship.</td>
<td><strong>STRONG</strong></td>
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<td>Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service.</td>
<td>approaches to public, familial and private worship</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>MODERATE</td>
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<td>Counseling and the Reformed Confessions will be a feature of the course.</td>
<td>MODERATE</td>
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<td>Church/World</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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<td>Relationship of Reformed Confessions to other ecumenical documents</td>
<td>MODERATE</td>
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