ST 520 – Ecclesiology and Sacraments

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Reformed Theological Seminary, Orlando
Fall 2014

Course description

In this course we will study the doctrines of the Church and the Sacraments. We will seek to contemplate, appreciate, and apply these doctrines as they are revealed in Holy Scripture and summarized in the Reformed confessions to the end that God might be glorified “in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations” (Ephesians 3.21). (2 hours.)

Required reading

Ephesians (students are required to read Ephesians slowly and prayerfully at least four times over the course of the semester)


Herman Bavinck, Reformed Dogmatics, vol. 4, chaps. 5-7 (available on reserve in the library)

J. van Genderen and W. H. Velema, Concise Reformed Dogmatics, chap. 14 (available on reserve in the library)

Cornelis Venema, “The Doctrine of the Sacraments and Baptism according to the Reformed Confessions” (available from professor)

Cornelis Venema, “The Doctrine of the Lord’s Supper in the Reformed Confessions” (available from professor)


Other short articles and essays will be made available over the course of the semester.
Assignments

1. **Ephesians report (5 % of final grade):** Students are required to read Ephesians slowly and prayerfully at least four times over the course of the semester. Students will provide a reading report on the final exam indicating whether or not they have done so.

2. **Reading report (20 % of final grade):** Attached to the final exam, students will turn in a reading report stating the percentage of the assigned readings that they have read with reasonable care over the course of the semester.

3. **Exams (60 % of final grade):** Students will take two exams over the course of the semester. Exams will test students’ critical grasp of doctrinal topics covered in class lectures, readings, and the Reformed confessions as well as their ability to communicate doctrinal topics in a clear manner.

4. **Paper (15 % of final grade):** Students will write a short paper on one of the topics treated in the course. Papers will be evaluated based on their ability (1) to articulate a clear thesis that rests upon sound biblical and theological argumentation and that addresses the strongest counterarguments to the thesis; (2) to engage with appropriate scholarly resources (at least eight); (3) to follow the prescribed format (10-12 pages in length, double spaced, Times New Roman font, Turabian format).

Academic Policies

1. **Late assignments:** Apart from exceptional circumstances, I will not accept late assignments for credit.

2. **Plagiarism:** Plagiarism, whether intentional or unintentional, will result in a failing grade for the course.

Office hours

Please email me ([sswain@rts.edu](mailto:sswain@rts.edu)) or Ceci Helm ([chelm@rts.edu](mailto:chelm@rts.edu)) to make an appointment.

For further reading

Gregg Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers: The Doctrine of the Church*


Herman Bavinck, *Saved by Grace: The Holy Spirit’s Work in Calling and Regeneration*
G. K. Beale, *The Temple and the Church’s Mission*

J. Todd Billings, *Union with Christ: Reframing Theology and Ministry for the Church*

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together*

John Calvin, *Treatises on the Sacraments*

*The Catechism of the Catholic Church*


Peter Gentry and Stephen Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant: A Biblical-Theological Understanding of the Covenants*

Michael Goheen, *A Light to the Nations: The Missional Church and the Biblical Story*

Stanley Hauerwas and William Willimon, *Resident Aliens*

Michael Horton, *People and Place: A Covenant Ecclesiology*

Hans Küng, *The Church*

Martin Luther, *On the Councils of the Church*

Stuart Robinson, *The Church of God as an Essential Element of the Gospel*

Thomas Schreiner and Shawn Wright, ed., *Believer’s Baptism: Sign of the New Covenant in Christ*

Timothy Tennant, *Theology in the Context of World Christianity*

Carl Trueman, *The Creedal Imperative*

Francis Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, vol. 3

Miroslav Volf, *After Our Likeness: The Church as the Image of the Trinity*
## Course Objectives Related to MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes

**Course:** Ecclesiology and Sacraments  
**Professor:** Scott R. Swain  
**Campus:** Orlando  
**Date:** Fall 2014

### 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.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Mini-Justification</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Articulation (oral &amp; written)</strong></td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Exams, paper</td>
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<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>
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<td><strong>Scripture</strong></td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Focus of all ST courses</td>
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<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>
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<td><strong>Reformed Theology</strong></td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Focus of all ST courses</td>
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<td>Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.</td>
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<td><strong>Sanctification</strong></td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Focus of all ST courses</td>
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<td>Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student’s sanctification.</td>
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<td><strong>Desire for Worldview</strong></td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Focus of all ST courses</td>
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<td>Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.</td>
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<td><strong>Winsomely Reformed</strong></td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Careful engagement with other views of church and sacraments</td>
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<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>
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<td><strong>Preach</strong></td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Sound understanding of biblical theology promotes sound preaching</td>
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<td>Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.</td>
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<td><strong>Worship</strong></td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Sound understanding of church and</td>
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<td>Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to</td>
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<td>Role</td>
<td>Ability Description</td>
<td>Level</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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<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>Moderate</td>
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