Reformed Theological Seminary
Washington, D.C.

N.B. If you have not taken ST2 already, please read, before the first class meeting, “Pentecost: Before and After,” by Richard Gaffin. It is on the course homepage.

6ST 524 (2 Credits)¹
Fall 2014
September 5—November 21
Friday, 9AM -12PM

Dr. Howard Griffith
Associate Professor of Systematic Theology
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703-408-3157

Office Hours: Wednesday, 1-2PM, or make an appointment—I enjoy getting to know everyone I can.

Course Goal:

To grasp something of the centrality of Church and Sacraments in biblical theology and life, and grow in service to the Church, Christ’s body and fullness.

Texts

Herman Bavinck, Reformed Dogmatics, Volume 4: Holy Spirit, Church and New Creation (HB 4). (If you have trouble ordering this or other books from Amazon, try the Westminster Seminary bookstore at www.wtsbooks.com).

Calvin, John, Short Treatise on the Holy Supper of Our Lord Jesus Christ (on the course homepage).

¹ Taking the systematic theology courses in sequence, despite statements to the contrary, though not required, will increase your ability in theology. However, first-time students may like to look at S. Grenz, Pocket Dictionary of Theological Terms, and J. van Genderen and W. H. Velema, Concise Reformed Dogmatics. They are not assigned, but “ConRefDog” is quite compatible with Bavinck.
John M. Frame and Richard B. Gaffin, Jr., “Realignment—An Exchange of Views” (on the course homepage.)


The Westminster Confession of Faith (WC)

Assignments 1-6:

1. Class attendance is required.

2. You are asked to complete all reading assignments by the dates indicated below. I will quiz you about them in class. Completed reading will be worth 20% of your final grade. I will ask about it on the final exam.

Weekly Assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Lecture</th>
<th>Reading completed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September 5</td>
<td>1. Introduction to Ecclesiology and Sacraments in historical-theological study.</td>
<td>WC Chapters 20-23, 25-26.</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 12</td>
<td>2. The Church in Redemptive Vos, “The Ministry of John the</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Reading Material</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 19</td>
<td>2.3 Pentecost and the Church. 2.4 Pauline metaphors for the Church.</td>
<td>Gaffin, Perspectives, finish; HB 4, Chapter 5.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 26</td>
<td>3. Issues in The Doctrine of the Church. 3.1 Gifts of the Spirit. 3.2 Ministry and Discipline.</td>
<td>HB 4, Chapter 6; WC Chapter 30.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 3</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>HB 4, Chapter 7.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 10</td>
<td>Reading Week, no class</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 17</td>
<td>3.3 Ministry of Women. 3.4 The Church and Suffering. 3.5 Attributes, Marks and Aspects of the Church</td>
<td>Poythress, “The Church as Family”; “Realignment” (Frame-Gaffin Exchange); WC Chapter 31.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 31</td>
<td>Baptism Debate</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>November 7</td>
<td>Research Paper due</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 14</td>
<td>5.2 The Lord’s Supper, the Reformation debate and the New Testament.</td>
<td>WC Chapter 29; HB 4, Chapter 11. Calvin, “Short Treatise”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 21</td>
<td>Final Exam in Class</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

3. Final Exam: this 3-hour exam will cover the lectures and reading. This exam will be worth 50% of your final grade. The exam will be given in class on November 21st, from 9AM -12PM. There will be a study guide on the course homepage. The exam will count as 40% of your final grade.

4. Class presentation: On October 31st, two sides will debate the question “Is Roman Catholic baptism valid Christian baptism?” (Study materials will be provided.) One side will take the affirmative, the other the negative. You need not hold the position you defend, but seek to present a compelling case. (Groups will be graded together.) This will be worth 10% of your final grade.
5. Research paper: In 12-15 pages (no more, no less, double spaced, 12 point font) discuss a topic in the area of the sacraments.²
The paper is due, in hard copy (no electronic submissions) at the beginning of class on November 7, 2014. I do not accept late papers.

Let your interests lead you to a topic. What is a question you have about Jesus? How does Scripture answer it?

- The paper must have a thesis statement—it must assert something. (Make this clear somehow near the beginning.)
- Then develop an argument that proves your thesis. In other words, there must be accurate description, but also more than description, namely evaluation according to the Bible.
- I want you to understand the classic Reformed theology on the subject, even if you have a different view. So, include exposition of the teaching of the Westminster Standards or the Three Forms of Unity on the subject you are dealing with.
- All M.Div. students are expected to make significant use of the original languages of Scripture. Here I am not looking for a few proof texts, but for real interaction with a central passage (or passages) of Scripture in context. (This means you will use commentaries.) Bad: “Baptism is an ordinance of Christ meant to be continued in his church until he returns (Matthew 28:18-20).” Good: “Baptism is an ordinance of Christ meant to be repeated in his church until he returns, because ...”—thesis statement follows—then there are paragraphs which explain the Scripture in its context in Matthew. Other theological points may now be mentioned and evaluated, showing how Moltmann, or Horton, for example, agree or how far they might agree, but what has been left unsaid, for example. Bad: “Roger Nicole is a credo-baptist, while Meredith G. Kline is a paedo-baptist.” Good: “In denying infant baptism Beasley-Murray takes a position that proves unbiblical, because he says the New Testament teaches that baptism saves. It is true that a number of passages of the New Testament indicate that God does signify salvation with water baptism, but a number also indicate that not all the water-baptized are saved”—Scripture exposition follows, showing what you mean by “signifies” and what scriptures indicate this—Then further elaboration: “Beasley-Murray answers this point about this text by saying ‘No!’ because he ...”—then you reply, “However, what he fails to state, or notice, is...” At the end of the paper, you should sum up what you have found.

² You may like to evaluate a contemporary theological position on baptism or the Supper. Should infants receive baptism? Should persons be required to profess faith before being admitted to the Lord’s Supper? Should children be admitted to the Lord’s Supper? On what conditions? What, if anything, is the meaning of the “intinction” of the bread? Etc.
• You should be familiar with the readings assigned for the course, and go beyond them in the paper. You must use at least fifteen good (solid-scholarly, not popular-theological, no magazines like Christianity Today or Modern Reformation), non-internet, sources (of course you may find articles on the internet, but in no case may you cite a blog), including the Westminster Standards. You may not use a study Bible as a source. A good source is the kind a theologian would cite. (The Matthew Henry Commentary is not a good source. You may not use a study Bible as a source.) The point of good sources is your use of them—how do they stimulate your interest, challenge your position, enhance your argument, etc.?

Formal Term Paper Standards

You must use standard paper conventions found in Kate Turabian, A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations. There is a quick version at http://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/turabian/turabian_citationguide.html. Failure to follow these conventions will reduce your grade. Please include a title page with your name, but omit headers or footers that include your name. Also, include a bibliography. If you cite an e-book, you must include the page number of the print version. You may collect your graded paper at the RTS office.


Grading System for Papers:

A: Good grasp of basic issues, plus something extraordinary, worthy of publication in a technical or a popular publication. That special excellence may be of various kinds: formulation, illustration, comprehensiveness, subtlety/nuance, creativity, argument, insight, correlations with other issues, historical perspective, philosophical sophistication, and research beyond the requirements of the assignment. One of these will be enough! M.Div. students, and M.A.R. students who have studied Greek or Hebrew, must make relevant use of the meaning of Scripture in the original languages to receive the grade “A.” This may require extra work.

A−: An A paper, except that it requires some minor improvement before an editor should finally accept it for publication.

B+: Good grasp of basic issues but without the special excellences noted above. A few minor glitches.

B: The average grade for graduate study. Good grasp of basic issues, but can be significantly improved.

B−: Shows an understanding of the issues, but marred by significant errors, unclarities (conceptual or linguistic), unpersuasive arguments, and/or shallow thinking.

C+: Raises suspicions whether largely these terms and concepts are used appropriately. Does show serious study and preparation.
C: Uses ideas with some accuracy, but without mastery or insight; thus the paper is often confused.
C-: The student has a relatively poor, but barely competent, understanding of the subject.
D: Shows effort but absolutely nothing more.
F: Failure to complete the assignment satisfactorily. Such performance would disqualify a candidate for ministry if it were part of a presbytery exam.

Most of my students get B’s. I try to keep A’s and C’s to a relatively small number. F’s are rare.

The paper will count as 30% of your grade.

6. Memorize and recite (any translation) Ephesians 4:4-6. For M.Div. students: also memorize Shorter Catechism 88-97. I will ask about these on the Final Exam.

Completed reading 20%, debate 10%, final exam 40%, term paper 30%.

Grading Scale: the standard RTS grading scale (Catalog, p. 42).

**Approximate Time Investment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lectures</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term paper</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memorization</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final exam (3 hours, plus preparation)</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>120</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix

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3 Abbreviations for Comments on Papers: A – awkward; Amb – ambiguous; Arg - more argument needed; C – compress; Circle (drawn around some text)- usually refers to misspelling or other obvious mistake; D – define; E - expand, elaborate, explain; EA - emphasis argument; F - too figurative for context; G - grammatical error; III – illegible; Illus - illustrate, give example; Int – interesting; M - misleading in context; O - overstated, overgeneralized; PS- problem in paragraph structure; R - redundant; Ref- reference (of pronoun, etc.); Rel- irrelevant, or relevance unclear; Rep – repetitious; Resp - not responsive (In a dialogue: one party raises a good question to which the other does not respond.); S - summary needed; Scr - needs more scripture support; Simp – oversimplified; SM - straw man (a view nobody holds); SS - problem in sentence structure; St - style inappropriate; T - transition needed; U – unclear; V – vague; W - questionable word-choice; Wk - weak writing (too many passives, King James English, etc.); WO - word order; WV - whose view? yours? another author?
Policy on Late Assignments

Simply put, late exams and papers are not accepted based on the following rationale:

“a. The issue is not so much an inconvenience to the professor. If that were the primary issue, then he would grade late papers because it is fundamental to his Christian commitment to put the interests of others before his own.
b. The issue concerns the apparent laxity with which extensions are often granted. This is not Christian education. Wisdom is living within boundaries. The cosmos exists because the Creator provided boundaries for air, water, land. Moreover, he provided temporal boundaries for seasons. Without boundaries, the cosmos would degenerate back into anarchy. It is the essence of Christian living that we live within boundaries. Liberals want no boundaries. They want freedom without form, liberty without law, lovemaking without marriage. This is a fundamental battle. It is distressing when Christians do not show respect for boundaries and when students do not respect temporal boundaries.
c. Wisdom also entails knowing the goal and devising a strategy to achieve it. Students must be aware from the syllabus what is required of them and should be able to strategize a successful model to achieve it. Laxity and uncertainty with regard to deadlines actually confuse the students and militate against a good Christian education. Paradoxically, “grace” sounds Christian and pastoral and “law” sounds non-Christian; but, sometimes so-called “grace” and “pastoral concerns” encourage libertarianism and in truth is non-Christian and non-pastoral. Consciously or unconsciously students realize that there is a fudge factor here, enabling them to rationalize their not turning in work on time.
d. The issue also pertains to spiritual life, a subject on which a seminary rightly prides itself. However, the spiritual life includes self-control, discipline, etc. Students reap good fruit from hard work.”

Supplemental Bibliography

1. The Doctrine of the Church


Carson, D. A. Becoming Conversant with the Emerging Church: Understanding a Movement and Its Implications (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005).

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4 Adapted from Professor Bruce K. Waltke.
Church in Emerging Culture: Five Perspectives, Frederica Matthews-Green, ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan/Youth Specialties, 2003).


Clowney, E. P. Called to the Ministry (Phillipsburg: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1964).

Clowney, E. P. The Church, Contours of Christian Theology, ed. G. Bray (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 1995).


Frame, John M. Evangelical Reunion (available at Frame-Poythress.org).


Lewis, C. S. “Membership” in The Weight of Glory and Other Essays.


Wallace, Ronald S. Calvin’s Doctrine of the Christian Life.

2. The Sacraments in General


Wallace, Ronald. Calvin’s Doctrine of the Word and Sacraments

3. Baptism


Kline, Meredith G. By Oath Consigned: A Reinterpretation of the Covenant Signs of Circumcision and Baptism (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1968).


Wright, David F., ed. *Baptism: Three Views* (Downers Grove, Ill: InterVarsity Academic, 2009). With essays by Bruce A. Ware (credo), Sinclair B. Ferguson (paedo), and Anthony N. S. Lane (dual practice) in counterpoint, this is the best debate over infant baptism in the covenantal discussion. (And Ferguson is right 😊.)

4. The Lord’s Supper

Calvin, John, *Short Treatise on the Holy Supper of Our Lord Jesus Christ*. This is available many places. If possible, read it in the Library of Christian Classics edition, entitled Calvin: Theological Treatises, ed. J. K. S. Reid. It can also be found on the web.

Davis, Thomas J. *This is My Body: The Presence of Christ in Reformation Thought* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008).


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**Course Objectives Related to M Div* Student Learning Outcomes**

Course: 6ST 524, The Doctrines of the Church and Sacraments  
Professor: Howard Griffith  
Campus: Washington D.C.  
Date: Fall 2014

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>M Div* Student Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Mini-Justification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In order to measure the success of the M Div curriculum, RTS has defined the following as the intended outcomes of the student learning process. Each course contributes</td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Minimal</td>
<td>✔</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
to these overall outcomes. This rubric shows the contribution of this course to the M Div outcomes. *As the M Div is the core degree at RTS, the M Div rubric will be used in this syllabus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Evidence/Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Articulation (oral &amp; written)</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>
<td>Oral presentation, paper, exams.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scripture</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>
<td>Scripture memory. Systematic and biblical-theological consideration of doctrines, both in reading and in lectures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reformed Theology</td>
<td>Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Readings of WCF and the finest of Reformed theology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanctification</td>
<td>Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student’s sanctification.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>The church and its worship is the very purpose of the gospel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desire for Worldview</td>
<td>Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Emphasis on the biblical doctrine of church and sacraments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winsomely Reformed</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>
<td>Though there is much controversy connected to these subjects, I try to be winsome as I commend the Reformed doctrines of the church and sacraments. The debate assignment requires a fair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role</td>
<td>Ability Description</td>
<td>Level</td>
<td>Positional Focus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preach</td>
<td>Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
<td>Content oriented, not practice oriented.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worship</td>
<td>Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service.</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Stresses the importance of the means of grace.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<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>Strong</td>
<td>Stresses the work of the church in edification.</td>
</tr>
<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>Strong</td>
<td>Creates a love for the people of God in every denomination. Gives some attention to the unique calling of the church in relation to public issues.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>