The Doctrines of Ecclesiology and the Sacraments

Reformed Theological Seminary
Washington, D.C.

Revised Syllabus

N.B. Before the first class meeting please read J.I. Packer, “Introduction: On Covenant Theology” in Herman Witsius, The Economy of the Covenants (on the course homepage).

6ST519 (2 Credits)
Spring 2016
February 9—April 19th
7-9:30PM

Dr. Howard Griffith
Associate Professor of Systematic Theology
hgriffith@rts.edu
703-408-3157

Office Hours: please make an appointment—I enjoy getting to know everyone I can.

Course description

This course explores biblical doctrine from a systematic perspective. Topics include ecclesiology and the sacraments.

Textbooks¹

Herman Bavinck, Reformed Dogmatics, Volume 4: Holy Spirit, Church and New Creation (HB 4); ISBN 978-0801026577


Howard Griffith, Spreading the Feast, Instruction and Meditations for Ministry at the Lord’s Table; ISBN 978-1629951768


Other required reading (on the course homepage)

Calvin, John, Short Treatise on the Holy Supper of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

¹ A number of these titles are available as e-books. I recommend printed books for study (though I do not require that you purchase them). Bavinck and Gaffin are books you will almost certainly want to read and reread.
John M. Frame and Richard B. Gaffin, Jr., “Realign—An Exchange of Views”


The Westminster Confession of Faith (this is available online many places). (WC)

Assignments

1. Class attendance is required.

2. Final Exam (50 %): Students will take a short essay exam that assesses their understanding and articulation of the course lectures, reading assignments, and relevant creeds and confessions. The exam is open book and open notes. I will post it on the course homepage. The exam is due uploaded to Canvas by 11:59PM on April 30th, 2016.

3. Research paper (25 %): Students will write a research paper (10-12 pages, double spaced, 12 pt Times New Roman font, Turabian format, with bibliography) that argues a specific thesis (i.e., a specific claim that can be argued on the basis of sound biblical and theological reasoning and defended against objections). More details will be forthcoming. See the Modules section of the Canvas course homepage. The paper is due emailed to me by 11:59PM on May 7th, 2016.

3. Reading report (25 %): Attached to the final exam, students will turn in a reading report that states the percentage of assigned readings that they have read with reasonable care by the due date of the final exam.

4. Class presentation (25%): There will be a total of four debate teams. Each student will be assigned to one team. On March 22nd, two teams will debate the question “Should we seek the sign-gifts of prophecy and tongues in the church today?” (For specifics, see “Sign-Gifts Debate Assignment” on the homepage.) On April 12th two (different) teams will debate the question “Is Roman Catholic baptism valid Christian baptism?” (See “Baptism Debate Assignment” and study materials on the homepage.)

   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.

5. For M.Div. students: memorize and recite Westminster Shorter Catechism, questions and answers 88-97. On the final exam, students will state whether they have accomplished this.

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.

Reading Schedule
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Lecture</th>
<th>Reading Completed</th>
<th>Other views (NOT required)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>February 9</td>
<td>1.  Introduction</td>
<td>Packer, “On Covenant Theology”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 16</td>
<td>2.  The Church in Redemptive History</td>
<td>Bavinck, Chapters 5-6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.1  OT Roots.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 1</td>
<td>2.3  Pauline Metaphors.</td>
<td>Bavinck, Chapter 7; WC Chapters 20-23, 25-26; 30-31; “Realignment”</td>
<td>Allison, 205-248.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.4  Gift and Office.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 8</td>
<td>3.1  Spiritual gifts.</td>
<td>Gaffin, Perspectives; Poythress, “The Church as Family”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.2  Ministry of Women.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 15</td>
<td>no class</td>
<td>Catch up</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 22</td>
<td>Sign-Gifts Debate</td>
<td>Catch up</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 29</td>
<td>4.  The Sacraments.</td>
<td>Bavinck Chapter 8; Griffith, Spreading, pp. 15-41 WC Chapters 7, 27,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.1  Covenant and Sign.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 5</td>
<td>4.2  Baptism and infant baptism.</td>
<td>Bavinck Chapter 10; Wright, ed., Baptism, Three Views; WC Chapter 28,</td>
<td>Allison, 321-64.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 12</td>
<td>Roman Baptism Debate</td>
<td>Catch up</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 19</td>
<td>The Lord’s Supper</td>
<td>Calvin, Short Treatise; Griffith, Spreading, pp. 41-144; WC Chapter 29,</td>
<td>Allison, 365-412.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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).

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.

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).

Geldenhuys, Norval. “The Day and Date of the Crucifixion,” *Commentary on the*


Griffith, Howard. Spreading the Feast, Instruction and Meditations for Ministry at the Lord’s Table (Phillipsburg: P&R Publications, 2015).


Course Objectives Related to MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes
Course: 6ST519, The Doctrines of the Church and Sacraments
Professor: Howard Griffith
Campus: Washington DC
Date: Spring 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Mini-Justification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Articulation (oral &amp; written)</td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Oral presentation, paper, exams.</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></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scripture</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Scripture memory. Systematic and biblical-theological consideration of doctrines,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Strength Level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reformed Theology</td>
<td>Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards. (Includes appropriate use of original languages and hermeneutics; and integrates theological, historical, and cultural/global perspectives.)</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanctification</td>
<td>Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student’s sanctification.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desire for World view</td>
<td>Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.</td>
<td>Strong</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>
</tr>
<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>
</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>
</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>
</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>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>