

Christian Life and Doctrine (04ST612)

Reformed Theological Seminary Atlanta
Spring 2019

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Class Schedule

Class will meet on the following eight (8) Monday evenings from 6:45pm to 10pm at First Presbyterian Church in Macon, GA:

February 4
February 11
February 25
March 11
March 18
March 25
April 8
April 15

Class Description

This course will focus on the exposition of key doctrines that pertain specifically to growth in the Christian life. It will involve the study of Scripture for personal nurture and the exercise of certain disciplines necessary for spiritual growth.

Required Reading

John Onwuchekwa, *Prayer: How Praying Together Shapes the Church*.

Donald Macleod, *Shared Life: The Trinity and the Fellowship of God's People*

Guy M. Richard, *What Is Faith?*

John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (Battles translation), 1.12.1 – 1.13.29 (pp. 116-59).

JC Ryle, *Holiness: Its Nature, Hindrances, Difficulties, and Roots*.

Walter Marshall, *The Gospel Mystery of Sanctification: Growing in Holiness by Living in Union with Christ. A New Version Put Into Modern English by Bruce H. McRae* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2005). Amazon currently has this available in Kindle edition.

Guy M. Richard, *Baptism: Answers to Common Questions* (available late Jan 2019).

**It is expected that students will bring their Bibles with them to class.*

Student Evaluation

1. **Required Reading: 30% of final grade. Date Due: April 15, 2019.**

Students will report on the percentage of reading they have completed over the course of the semester. If the student does not report the percentage of the reading they have completed, it will be assumed that they have not completed any of it.

2. **Reflection Papers: 50% of final grade. Date Due: May 6, 2019.**

Students will be expected to complete reflection papers on six (6) of the main texts for the course: John Onwuchekwa, Donald Macleod, JC Ryle, Walter Marshall, and Guy Richard (both books). Each paper should be 4 pages double-spaced (12-pt font Times New Roman or equivalent). It should interact with the assigned text in question. Students should describe relevant main points, distinctive emphases, and outline perceived strengths and weaknesses. NB: I am not interested in mere regurgitation of the main points. I am interested in seeing you reflect upon the text in question, citing strengths and weaknesses of the argument from a theological and biblical point of view along with explaining what you personally have found helpful for your life and ministry.

3. **Sermon Analyses: 20% of final grade. Date Due: May 6, 2019.**

Students will listen to and evaluate four (4) sermons that deal with topics that have been covered in this class. Choose any four topics from the list below. Then listen to four sermons on those four topics (one each) and then write a one (1) page evaluation of the sermon according to the following criteria:

- (1) How does the sermon treat the doctrine under consideration?
- (2) Does it do so accurately, effectively, pastorally, and practically? If so, what makes the sermon so accurate, effective, pastoral, and practical?
- (3) Does the sermon balance the indicative (teaching/didactic) with the imperative (exhortation/application)? If so, how? If not, what could be done better?
- (4) Does the sermon reach the affections or is it merely communicating information? If so, how? If not, what could be done better?

The one-page evaluation should be single spaced and 12pt font (Times New Roman or equivalent). It should mention the author of the sermon, the date the sermon was given, the date the sermon was listened to (if different), the text and title of the sermon, and your name. Students can listen to sermons dealing with any of the following ten (10) topics:

- (1) The Doctrine of Scripture
- (2) The Trinity
- (3) Faith
- (4) Justification
- (5) Adoption
- (6) Sanctification
- (7) Baptism
- (8) The Lord's Supper
- (9) Fellowship as a means of grace

(10) Suffering

All work is due by Monday, May 6 at 5pm. Everything must be submitted by email to the professor at the above email address by the deadline. Late submissions will be accepted but will merit a deduction of 3 percentage points per day off of what would otherwise be the student's grade (i.e., if student earned a 95 on given assignment [out of total of 100 points] and was 2 days late, the student's final grade would be an 89 [i.e., 95 – 6 points = 89]). The 3 percentage-point penalty will begin at 5:01pm on May 6 (according to the date on the email). This penalty will be waived only if a student is providentially hindered from completing the assignments on time (i.e., death, hospitalization, etc.) and/or has made prior arrangements with the professor.

Tentative Weekly Lecture Schedule

1. Course Introduction; Syllabus Review; Introduction to Systematic Theology
2. Doctrine of Scripture
3. Use of Creeds and Confessions of Faith; Doctrine of the Trinity
4. Doctrine of the Trinity, continued; Introduction to Soteriology
5. Faith, Justification, Adoption
6. Sanctification—Introduction and importance of; Sanctification and the *ordo salutis*
7. Spiritual Disciplines; The Means of Grace; Preaching; Sacraments
8. Sacraments, continued; Prayer; Fellowship? and The Role of Suffering