

Meeting Time: Thursdays, 1:00 PM – 3:55 PM

Spring 2019

Meeting Place: TBD

*Note: the professor reserves the right to modify this syllabus as needed at any time.***Contact Information***Professor*

Bruce Baugus

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Teaching Assistants

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Catalog Course Description

A study of Christology, giving particular emphasis to both the Person and Work of Jesus Christ. The course will attempt to survey the material from an exegetical, biblical-theological, historical and credal basis, giving particular attention to points of interest and debate in our own time.

Expanded Course Description

This course is designed for students in the M.Div. degree program who have already taken Hebrew and Greek, Covenant Theology, History of Philosophy and Christian Thought, Church History I & II, and Systematic Theology 1. (Students in other degree programs, no degree program, or who have not taken these courses are welcome, but may sometimes find required readings, course lectures, and class discussions less profitable.)

Systematic theology involves integrating the various branches of biblical and theological studies at the point of doctrinal formulation and in this sense represents the culmination of theological studies. It does not, however, exist for its own sake nor is it a final end of our knowledge of God. Rather, systematic theology exists to meet the confessional and didactic needs of the church's ministry and mission of knowing, worshipping, proclaiming, and living ever more perfectly for God in this world that we might glorify and enjoy him ever more fully. To this end, William Perkins famously defines theology as "the science of living blessedly forever" while C. S. Lewis warns us "there are theologians in the bottom of hell who are more interested in their own thoughts about God than in God himself."¹

In this course, we will focus on (1) presenting a systematic statement of the biblical teaching on the topics of Christ (Christology), salvation (soteriology), and last things (eschatology) as understood and taught within the Reformed tradition, demonstrating that these formulations represent (2) the correct understanding of Scripture and (3) the doctrine God's people need to thrive as disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ and worshipers of the living God. Our objectives in this class correspond to our focus: at the conclusion of this course you will be (1a) properly prepared for pastoral ministry in an orthodox and evangelical Reformed or Presbyterian church on the topics covered, confident in (2a) the biblical foundation and (3a) practical usefulness of the Reformed understanding of Christ, salvation, and last things. The chief objective we have in this course, however, is doxological: that students will come to know God as he is revealed in Scripture and gives himself to us to be enjoyed through faith, and worship him accordingly.

¹ William Perkins, *The Golden Chaine* (1590), 1; similarly practical definitions of theology can be found among most of our Reformed fathers. Similarly, Hendrikus Berkhof, *Introduction to the Study of Dogmatics*, p. 15, states that "C. S. Lewis once wrote" this, he does not say where and I have not yet found out. Wes Strebeck suggests Berkhof is referring to a passage in *The Great Divorce* in which George MacDonald says, "there have been men before now who got so interested in proving the existence of God that they came to care nothing for God Himself, . . . as if the good Lord had nothing to do but *exist!* There have been some who were so occupied in spreading Christianity that they never gave a thought to Christ. Man! Ye see it in smaller matters. Did ye never know a lover of books that with all his first editions and signed copies had lost the power to read them? Or an organizer of charities that had lost all love for the poor? It is the subtlest of all the snares" (70-71).

Successful students will demonstrate an ability to conduct independent theological research and fluency in the main questions of theological method and the doctrines of Christ, salvation, and last things—able to articulate (from Scripture and confessional standards wherever possible) and defend Reformed views on these interrelated questions (even if those views differ from your own). This requires students to be conversant in the exegesis of key passages of Scripture and issues involved in relevant historic and contemporary debates, showing how the gospel is implicated in these debates and the practical significance to the faith, life, and worship of the church. It is also important that students demonstrate an ability to discuss and assess theological differences in a way that aims at realizing, maintaining, and displaying the unity of the one holy and universal church in its many historic and contemporary branches to the glory of her Lord and Savior.

Readings*Systematic Textbook*

Herman Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics*, 4 vols. (Baker, 2008: ISBN 9780801035760)

Note: required readings for this course come primarily from vols. 3–4.

Standards

Ecumenical Creeds: Apostles' Creed; Nicene Creed; and Chalcedonian Creed

The Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms (OPC/PCA version: ISBN 9780979377006)

Note: you are required to memorize WSC QQ54–107 for this course (see Assignments below). You are also required to bring this text and a copy of Scripture to class each day.

Three Forms of Unity: Belgic Confession, Heidelberg Catechism, and Canons of Dordrecht

Note: the Ecumenical Creeds and Three Forms of Unity are available as a single pdf here: http://urclearning.org/wp-content/uploads/3_forms.pdf, among many other places.

On Christ

Donald Macleod, *The Person of Christ: Contours of Christian Theology* (IVP: ISBN 9780830815371)

_____, *Christ Crucified: Understanding the Atonement* (IVP: ISBN 9780830840618)

On Salvation

Richard Gaffin, *By Faith, Not by Sight: Paul and the Order of Salvation*, 2d ed. (P&R: ISBN 97815963884439)

Sinclair Ferguson, *The Whole Christ* (Crossway: ISBN 9781433548000)

On Last Things

Cornelius Venema, *The Promise of the Future* (Banner of Truth: ISBN 9780851517933)

Dictionary

Richard A. Muller, *Dictionary and Latin and Greek Theological Terms* (Baker: ISBN 9780801020643)

Attendance & Participation Policy

Your primary assignment is to be present, prepared, and ready to participate fully in class each week. This requires showing up on time and remaining for the duration of class, ready to contribute meaningfully by having read all assigned materials beforehand.

Any student who misses class or is grievously or repeatedly tardy (without prior permission or a compelling emergency) may find their course grade reduced on the following schedule:

1. By one full letter grade (e.g. A to B) for each unexcused absence
2. By one increment (e.g. A to A-) for each unexcused tardy or absence from class of more than 20 minutes
3. By one increment (e.g. A to A-) for every unexcused tardy of less than 20 minutes, for repeat offenders

Students found studying for other classes or using electronic devices for any reason not directly related to the current topic of discussion will be counted as being tardy or absent from class for more than 20 minutes.

Permission to be absent from class will ordinarily be granted only for medical reasons or family crises. Elective choices such as attending a conference, work (including RTS and church internship duties), enrolling in another course in conflict with this one, and so on, are unacceptable excuses. (The professor will try to accommodate special events on campus and presbytery meetings, as needed.)

Note: this “law is not laid down for the just but for the lawless and disobedient” (1 Tim 1:9).

Technology Use Policy

Since students who type notes during lectures consistently perform worse on exams and other assessments of lecture and discussion comprehension, laptops and tablets are prohibited in class except by special permission from the professor.² (Permission is ordinarily restricted to matters of learning disabilities or those who handwrite their notes directly into a tablet application). Phones must be on silent and kept out of sight (and mind). If you must receive or place a call, even during a class break, please leave the classroom to do so.

Assignments*Essay Exams*

You will be given a midterm exam over fall break and a final exam at the conclusion of the course. Both exams are timed essay exams that will be administered through the course page on Canvas. A representative list of essay questions will be posted on Canvas as a study guide. An element of choice will be built into both exams: you will be asked to write on three (3) out of four (4) essay prompts on the midterm exam and five (5) out of seven (7) on the final exam.

Both exams are administered via Canvas and timed. You must complete the exam in a single session within the designated window of opportunity (90 minutes for the midterm and 120 minutes for the final). The exams are open note and open book (but you are strongly encouraged to prepare notes or essays ahead of time, from the study guide, if you hope to complete the exam within the time limit); you must complete the exam on your own and not discuss the content of the either exam with classmates until the professor notifies you that all exams have been submitted.

Reading Report

You will write up a concise, single paragraph summary of the argument in each assigned chapter of the required topical readings (i.e. excluding Bavinck and Standards) for this course on Christ, salvation, and last things (see schedule for assigned chapters). The report is due by 5:00 PM on the final day of class and should be submitted as a single pdf document organized into five parts by title of each book.

Term Paper

Students will write a 10-12 page term paper on an approved issue in Christology, soteriology, or eschatology that integrates exegetical, historical and systematic perspectives and employs sound argumentation that demonstrates a clearly stated thesis. Proper style and formatting are expected (see latest edition of Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*). Papers ought to be error-free and reflect quality research and careful, critical analysis and articulation.

Note: a graduate level term paper is expected to identify and engage at least five (5) and preferably eight (8) or more scholarly sources in the argument of your paper. Acceptable secondary sources will ordinarily be articles or monographs published in peer reviewed journals (print or online) or for an academic audience or of historical note. Scripture and confessional standards are expected to be used and richly inform your discussion but ordinarily should not be listed in bibliographies (though they must be cited in the body of the text when directly discussed or quoted). These and required course readings do not count towards the expected minimum number of academic sources.

You should seek the professor's approval of your paper topic and are encouraged to discuss your proposed thesis with the professor. You should also take full advantage of the resources available to you in the Writing Lab in the Biblical Studies building.

² See, for example, Pam A. Mueller and Daniel M. Oppenheimer, "The Pen is Mightier Than the Keyboard: Advantages of Longhand over Laptop Not Taking," *Psychological Science* 25.6 (June 2014): 1159-1168. See also the excellent guide produced by Harvard University's Harvard Initiative for Learning and Teaching (HILT): Machael C. Friedman, "Notes and Note-Taking: Review of Research and Insights for Students and Instructors," available online at http://hilt.harvard.edu/files/hilt/files/notetaking_0.pdf and appended to this syllabus.

Assignment Submission Policy

Submit written assignments as individual pdf files via email to baugus.assignments@gmail.com. I will confirm receipt within 24 hours of your submission. If you have not received a confirmation from me within 24 hours, be sure to follow up promptly using my contact information at the top of this syllabus.

Course Grade

Essay Exams	
Midterm	20%
Final	30%
Reading Report	10%
<u>Term Paper</u>	<u>40%</u>
Total	100%



Course Objectives Related to MDiv Student Learning Outcomes

<u>MDiv Student Learning Outcomes</u>		<u>Rubric</u>	<u>Mini-Justification</u>
Articulation (oral & written)	Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, and cultural/global information, including details, concepts, and frameworks.	Strong	Primary course objective is for students to become articulate in the Reformed orthodox doctrines of Christ, salvation, and last things in just this way.
Scripture	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.)	Strong	Scripture and the source and norm of our theology. This course is constantly presenting a summary of biblical teaching on the topics under consideration.
Reformed Theology	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Strong	The class is presents an explicitly Reformed orthodox view of the respective doctrines as articulated in Westminster and other Reformed sources.
Sanctification	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Moderate	The course has the salvation accomplished for us by Christ and applied to us by the Spirit constantly in view.
Desire for Worldview	Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.	Moderate	The application of theology to life is brought out frequently through this course.
Winsomely Reformed	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.)	Moderate	The professor strives to model and encourage this ethos in the course as we consider various alternatives and challenges to the Reformed doctrine of Scripture.
Preach	Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.	Moderate	Theology is central to the task of every faithful pastor and preacher.
Worship	Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service.	Minimal	The practical aspects of worship leadership are not a central concern of the course, though theology is of course vital to true worship.
Shepherd	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.	Minimal	See "Worship" above.
Church/World	Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.	Minimal	See "Worship" above.