

REFORMED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
05ST517/01 Systematic Theology II Syllabus
Fall 2016–Houston Campus
Dr. W. Duncan Rankin

Course Description

A study of **Christology** (the person and work of Jesus Christ), **soteriology** (the application of Christ's work of redemption, the *ordo salutis*, and its benefits for the redeemed), and **eschatology** (the doctrine of last things, both general and personal) are the topics of this course. Our survey of doctrine will be based on the exegesis of Scripture, with continual reference to dogmatic and historical theology. All along we will remember the crucial nexus between faith and life, doctrine and practice, and thus endeavor to stress the importance of this doctrine for Christian thought, life, and ministry.

Prerequisites

Students in this class are expected already to have studied theological prolegomena, the doctrine of Scripture, the doctrine of God, and the doctrine of man. Those who have not mastered these subjects are expected to have read Louis Berkhof's *Manual of Christian Doctrine* [Eerdmans] and Donald Macleod's *Faith to Live By* [Mentor] before the start of class. These works will introduce the student to theological concepts and terminology.

Course Objectives

To introduce the student to the main Biblical themes concerning the person and work of Christ, salvation, and last things is the main objective of this course. We also will endeavor to increase the student's understanding of these doctrines (and the historical/contemporary debates surrounding them) and ability to communicate them (in both academic and popular settings). To strengthen the student's commitment to historic Christian theology and to assist in preparing the student to deal with unbiblical systems of theology in their various contemporary manifestations are also important course goals. Finally, we will seek to move the student to obedience and worship of the God who redeemed him.

Course Requirements

Required Texts:

Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* [Eerdmans] (305-549, 661-739)
John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 1559 edition, Battles trans.
[Westminster/JKP] (464-1008)
Robert Letham, *The Work of Christ* [IVP] (all)

Donald Macleod, *Jesus is Lord: Christology Yesterday and Today* [Mentor] (all)
Donald Macleod, *The Person of Christ* [IVP] (all)
John Murray, *Redemption Accomplished and Applied* [Eerdmans] (all)
Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms [Free Presbyterian] (*WCF and WLC only*)

Class Attendance:

Given the concentrated nature of the instruction hours, full class attendance will be imperative for successful completion of this course. In case of sickness or hardship, the student should clear the absence with the instructor by calling (706) 691-3702 or by e-mail (wduncanrankin@gmail.com).

During lecture hours, students are asked to hold their questions until asked for by the instructor. Get in the habit of writing your questions down in the margin of your notes, so that you can come back to them later. Often, your questions will be answered in the next breath the instructor takes. If your question is not answered by the end of the lecture hour, please write it down and give it to the instructor. He will try to deal with it in the next hour or at the appropriate time in the series of lectures. Your cooperation in this matter is greatly appreciated.

Students are expected to bring their copies of the *Westminster Confession of Faith* and the Bible to class every day. Classes will begin with a hymn and a prayer. Students are also expected to bring their marked copy of the text being considered in seminar group each day, as it may be inspected by the professor for evidence of assignment completion.

Evaluation:

Because of its central and essential importance to the Gospel ministry, please expect to spend a serious quantity and quality of work on this course. If you are called to the Gospel ministry in any shape, form, or fashion, then the content of this course is absolutely essential for the well being of your own soul, as well as that of those who sit under you. Pour your heart, mind, and strength into the learning: if not for yourself and your own family, then at least for your future congregation and people. It will glorify God!

1. Reading Seminar (20%)

The class will be broken down into small groups of four for daily reading seminars, giving more opportunity for interaction and discussion. These periods will be times for students to interact and discuss the assigned readings for that day. They will also serve as a check to make sure that the assigned readings are being completed and that their content is being assimilated into the lecture materials. Reading Seminars are a time to rethink and answer any remaining questions students may have on a particular aspect of a doctrine before moving on to the next.

Students will fill out a Reading Report Form (see Course Notes) on each assigned reading and bring it to class. A schedule of seminar readings follows in the Course Assignment Schedule.

2. Berkhof Study Guide Questions (20%)

A list of Berkhof Study Guide Questions is given in the Course Notes. Each Reading Seminar small group of four will be expected to submit written answers to these questions together. Answers should draw upon lecture material, text books, and Berkhof's *Systematic Theology*. Additional material from other standard systematic theologies (such as R. L. Dabney's *Systematic Theology*) or Protestant confessions (such as the Second Helvetic Confession and the Belgic Confession) will receive extra consideration.

3. Term Paper (30%)

A 8 page paper on an assigned topic will be required (see Course Notes for topics to be distributed among the students). The student will be given a particular passage in a heterodox christology to engage and critique. Papers should include the following sections: introduction (of the topic, including a clear one sentence thesis statement), background (biographical and/or dogmatic), descriptive summary (of the author's christological claims), internal critique (granting the author his key assumptions), external critique (denying the author his key assumptions), and bibliography (primary and secondary). This term paper should be neatly typed and follow the specifications in Kate Turabian's *Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (6th edition). It should have one inch margins, use footnotes rather than end or text notes, and have a common type font. The font size should be 10. Papers not meeting these requirements or with excessive grammatical errors will be returned to the student for re-submission or downgraded.

4. Final Exam (30%)

The Final Examination will test the student's knowledge (and mastery) of material covered in the course lectures and reading, and allow the student to apply principles learned in the course to a theological test case. It will be a 3 hour comprehensive exam, testing detailed knowledge.

5. Extra Credit (up to 10%)

Students wishing extra credit for the course may submit preces of no more than two pages each on any of the following theological topics covered by the course:

The Person of Christ
The Work of Christ
Effectual Calling and Regeneration
Saving Faith and Evangelical Repentance
Justification
Adoption and Sanctification
Perseverance of the Saints
Glorification
Death and Resurrection
Heaven and Hell

Course Assignment Schedule

Monday 12 September 2016	Syllabus and course introduction Background lecture on Covenant Theology
Monday 19 September 2016	Reading Seminar #1: Macleod's <i>Person of Christ</i> , chs 1-3 Reading Seminar #2: Macleod's <i>Jesus is Lord</i> , chs 1-3 Lectures on the Person of Christ
Monday 26 September 2016	Reading Seminar #3: Macleod's <i>Person of Christ</i> , chs 4-5 Reading Seminar #4: Macleod's <i>Jesus is Lord</i> , ch 4 Lectures on the Person of Christ Review of Outline of Heppe's <i>Reformed Dogmatics</i> , ch. 17
Monday 3 October 2016	Reading Seminar #5: Calvin's <i>Institutes</i> II.12-17 Lectures on the Person of Christ
Monday 10 October 2016	Reading Seminar #6: Macleod's <i>Person of Christ</i> , chs 6-10 Review of Outline of Heppe's <i>Reformed Dogmatics</i> , ch. 18 Lectures on the Work of Christ
Monday 17 October 2016	Reading Seminar #7: Macleod's <i>Jesus is Lord</i> , chs 5-7 Lectures on the Work of Christ
Monday 24 October 2016	Reading Seminar #8: Letham's <i>Work of Christ</i> , chs 1-4 Lectures on Soteriology
Monday 31 October 2016	Reading Seminar #9: Letham's <i>Work of Christ</i> , chs 5-9 Reading Seminar #10: Murray's <i>Redemption</i> , pt 1, chs 1-5 Lectures on Soteriology
Monday 7 November 2016	Reading Seminar #11: Letham's <i>Work of Christ</i> , chs 10-11 Lectures on Soteriology
Monday 14 November 2016	No Class
Monday 21 November 2016	Reading Seminar #12: Murray's <i>Redemption</i> , pt 2, chs 1-3 Lectures on Soteriology
Monday 28 November 2016	Reading Seminar #13: Murray's <i>Redemption</i> , pt 2, chs 4-5 Lectures on Eschatology
Monday 5 December 2016	Reading Seminar #14: Murray's <i>Redemption</i> , pt 2, chs 6-10 Reading Seminar #15: Berkhof's <i>Systematic</i> , Part 6 Lectures on Eschatology
Exam Week	Final Exam Term Paper due Berkhof Study Guide Questions due All Reading Reports due

Course Objectives Related to MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes

Course: Systematic Theology II: Christology, Soteriology & Eschatology (05ST517/01)
 Professor: W Duncan Rankin
 Campus: Houston
 Date: Spring 2016

<u>MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes</u>		<u>Rubric</u>	<u>Mini-Justification</u>
<i>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.</i>		> Strong > Moderate > Minimal > None	
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	The course strongly engages Scripture and Church History, furnishing students with knowledge of a variety of topics.
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	With their nose in the text, students will spend a significant amount of time studying and mediating upon Scripture. The class requires students to research and write on topics pertaining to Christology, Soteriology & Eschatology.
Reformed Theology	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Moderate	Central to this class is the exaltation of Christ as God, man, and Mediator, as well as the Reformed doctrine of salvation (accomplished and applied) and last things (general and personal).
Sanctification	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Moderate	Since students are exposed to the various facets of Christ, Salvation, and Eschatology, a love for Christ will inevitably grow as they continually look upon His character as seen in them.
Desire for Worldview	Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.	Strong	Key to this course is the divine and incarnate Lord Jesus Christ, whose Mediatorial work is applied to our minds, hearts, and futures through which we engage the world.
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.)	Strong	Much insight is gained, as Reformed views of Christ, Salvation and Last Things are compared and contrasted with non-Reformed views, with precision and balance.
Preach	Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.	Moderate	Throughout the course, attention will be given to how students are to preach on the topics of Christology, Soteriology, Eschatology.

Worship	Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service.	Minimal	As a result of this course, students will be wiser in how they worship Jesus by adoring him as God and man, seeing his great work applied to their lives, and longing for his glorious return.
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.	Moderate	Having a right view of Christ, salvation, and last things, which provides a basis for pastoral ministry and care.
Church/World	Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.	Minimal	As a net result of studying Christology, Soteriology, and Eschatology, students will be able to discern whether a teaching or movement is faithful to Jesus' Lordship over Church and world.