**05ST519 Systematic Theology 3 Syllabus**

**Ecclesiology and the Sacraments**

Reformed Theological Seminary

Spring 2017—Houston Campus

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### Course Description

This course will cover **ecclesiology** (the doctrine of the church) and **the sacraments** (the doctrines of baptism and the Lord’s Supper). Our study of these topics will be based on the exegesis of Scripture, but with continual reference to historical theology as well. We must remember that while we rely upon the Bible as our ultimate authority in matters of faith and life, we also “stand on the shoulders” of approximately 2000 years of history in our interpreting and applying of the Bible. As the well known Puritan William Perkins says (from *The Workes of…William Perkins*, vol. 3, 1618, p. 104):

Though the best men’s works be but base stuff to the pure word of God, yet the writings of holy men must not be condemned, but must be read and regarded in their place, for our furnishing and enabling to the study of the scriptures, for the helping of our knowledge and judgment in the word of God. They that hold or practise the contrary know not what helps they be and what light they yield to many dark places of scripture.

### Prerequisites

Students should be familiar with the concepts covered in Louis Berkhof’s *Manual of Christian Doctrine* and/or Donald Macleod’s *A Faith to Live By* before the start of any Systematic Theology class.

Students who are struggling with seeing the importance of Systematic Theology to pastoral ministry and to preaching will be helped by the following quotations and resources:

“To be effective preachers you must be sound theologians.” (Charles Spurgeon)

“[L]earning…is essential to a successful ministry.” (Charles Spurgeon)

“[T]heology helps the preacher as the coach helps the tennis player….As the coach is the embodiment of decades of experience in playing tennis, so theology is the embodiment of centuries of study, debate and interpretative interaction as the church has sought to understand the Scriptures. One can play tennis after a fashion without ever having been coached, and one can preach from the Bible after a fashion without ever having encountered serious theology in a serious way. But, just as one is likely to play better with coaching, so one is likely to preach better—more perceptively, more searchingly, more fruitfully—when helped by theology; and so the preacher who is theologically competent will, other things being equal, be more use to the church.” (JI Packer, “The Preacher as Theologian,” p. 316)

The following three resources may also be helpful in thinking through the relevancy of this course to preaching:

Donald Macleod, “Preaching and Systematic Theology,” in *The Preacher and Preaching*, ed. Sam T. Logan (P&R, 1986), 246-272.

JI Packer, “The Preacher as Theologian: Preaching and Systematic Theology,” in *Honouring the Written Word of God: The Collected Shorter Writings of JI Packer*, vol. 3 (Paternoster, 1999), 301-316.

John Murray, “Systematic Theology,” in *Collected Writings of John Murray*, vol. 4 (Banner of Truth, 1977), 1-21.

### Course Objectives

The principal aim of Systematic Theology is to provide students with a comprehensive understanding of the main doctrines of Christianity, specifically in those areas mentioned above in the Course Description. It is expected that students will have a competent grasp of the issues involved in this course and a facility to communicate them with some fluency. Since many branches of the church require their ordained clergy not only to commit to these doctrines in a more or less strict sense but also to be able to articulate them when examined, these things are also in mind as objectives in this course as well. Most importantly, since all theology has worship as its end, this course will seek to foster deeper devotion and faithfulness to our great God and King by deepening our knowledge of Him and our reverence for Him. He is indeed worthy of all we are and have!

Charles Spurgeon once pointed out that the study of theology should lead both seminary professors and students to the same end (*Sword and Trowel*, 1883, p. 262):

Tutors [i.e., Professors] should be what they wish their students to be; and what manner of men should ministers be? They should thunder in preaching, and lighten in conversation; they should be flaming in prayer, shining in life, and burning in spirit. If they be not so, what can they effect?

### Course Requirements

I. Required Reading

Students will be required to read the following texts and/or portions of texts before the end of the course:

John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (Westminster/John Knox, 1559 edition, Battles translation), Book 4, chapters 1-5, 12-15, and 17-20, which can be found on pages 1011-1102, 1229-1323, and 1359-1521. (350 pages)

*Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms* (Free Presbyterian Publications): chapters 21 and 25-31. (24 pages)

Mark Dever, *Nine Marks of a Healthy Church: New Expanded Edition* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2004). (246 pages)

Edmund P. Clowney, *The Church* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1995), chapters 9-11 and 16-18. (103 pages)

Sinclair B. Ferguson, *The Holy Spirit* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1996), chapters 9-10. (48 pages)

Guy M. Richard, *Answers to Common Questions about Baptism* (Sanford, FL: Reformation Trust, forthcoming in 2017). (PDF is available electronically from the professor.)

II. Class Attendance

Class attendance is imperative for successful completion of this course. Students are expected to bring their copies of the *Westminster Confession of Faith* (Free Presbyterian edition) and the Bible to class with them every day.

III. Evaluation

Let me encourage you to pour yourself into this class. This really will be one of the most important classes you will take in seminary. Years from now, you will find yourself drawing upon things you learned in this class in order to tackle issues in the church or in your own study of the Scriptures. You really will get out of this class what you put into it.

1. **Required Reading** (20%).

2. **Course Paper** (40%).

A 10-12 page theological paper (in Times New Roman 12pt font) is required for this course. Each student will select one of the following books that he or she finds most meaningful (please discuss it in advance with the professor and secure his approval). The paper must evaluate the book theologically and historically and draw applications and conclusions that would be relevant for his or her particular ministry or for the church in general. Please use Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers* (8th edition) with footnotes instead of endnotes. All papers are due with the Final Exam.

Kevin DeYoung and Greg Gilbert, *What is the Mission of the Church?: Making Sense of Social Justice, Shalom, and the Great Commission* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2011).

James Durham, *A Treatise Concerning Scandal* (1680; Dallas: Naphtali, 1990).

Mark Dever and Paul Alexander, *The Deliberate Church: Building Your Ministry on the Gospel* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2005).

John Owen, *The True Nature of a Gospel Church*, in The Works of John Owen, vol. 16, ed., William H. Goold (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1968).

Pete Ward, *Liquid Church* (Eugene, OR: Wipf&Stock, 2013).

Guy Prentiss Waters, *How Jesus Runs the Church* (Philipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2011).

Michael O. Emerson and Christian Smith, *Divided By Faith: Evangelical Religion and the Problem of Race in America* (Oxford: OUP, 2000).

4. **Final Exam** (40%).

The examination will be a lengthy and detailed test of the student’s mastery of all the material covered in the course lectures and reading and will require the student to apply principles learned in the course to practical test cases.

5. **Extra Credit** (10%).

Students may earn significant extra credit by researching and writing a 7-10 page paper (Times New Roman 12pt font) on any other of the books listed above on which they did not write their main paper. All papers are due with the Final Exam. Please use Turabian, *A Manual for Writers* (8th edition) with footnotes instead of endnotes. All papers are due with the Final Exam.

### Course Lecture Schedule

The following is the tentative schedule for the course:

February 3 pm Introductions, Syllabus, Course Introduction, Church Established

February 4 am Church and Kingdom, Visible and Invisible Church, Growth of

February 4 pm Nature of the Church

March 3 pm Attributes and Marks of the Church, Church Government

March 4 am Church Government, Sacraments

March 4 pm Baptism

March 31 pm Baptism

April 1 am Lord’s Supper

April 1 pm Lord’s Supper, Final Wrap-up

### Office Hours

The professor is available to meet with students before or after class (depending on flight schedules) or during breaks between lectures. Students are also welcome to contact the professor by phone (228-863-2664) or by email (grichard@fpcgulfport.org).

### Assignments

All assignments are due to the professor by May 12, at the latest. Any assignments received after this date will be considered late and will receive a 5% grade reduction for every day past the deadline. Please be sure that everything you hand in has your full name on it plus a way for me to contact you (email address, physical address, phone number…or all three).

### Paper Grading Guide

The following criteria will be used in grading all written papers for this course:

**Thesis Statement**—(15%)

 Clear, brief description of thesis statement (5)

 No thesis statement (0)

**Development** (i.e., does the paper have a beginning, middle, and end?)—(15%)

 Coherent (5)

 Begins well, but…(4)

 Fall apart after the first page (3)

 Stream of consciousness (2)

 Can’t make heads or tails of it (1)

 No paper (0)

**Content**—(40%)

 Shows thorough grasp of the material AND some independent thinking (5)

 Shows thorough grasp of the material AND some borrowed thinking (4)

 Raises more issues than can be answered (3)

 Doesn’t contain enough data to deal with the issue (2)

 Has virtually no content (1)

 No paper (0)

**Bibliography**—(10%)

 Solid bibliographical content (5)

 Adequate bibliography (3)

 Inadequate bibliography (2)

 No bibliography (0)

**Errors**—(20%)

 Shows a thorough grasp of Turabian formatting style (5)

 Uses a different style, even with some coherence (4)

 Some grammatical and/or typographical errors (3)

 Solecisms abounding (2)

 Paper written in a language other than English (1)

 No paper (0)

**Late Papers**—(reduction of final grade by 5% per day from the due date)

The grade I will assign you is based upon your fulfillment of the instructions for the assignment, the overall quality of your presentation, my assessment of your grasp of the subject matter, your skill in communication of the material, and how well you did your work in comparison with your peers in the class.



**Course Objectives Related to MDiv\* Student Learning Outcomes**

Course: Systematic Theology (05ST519)

Professor: Guy M. Richard

Campus: Houston

Date: Spring 2017

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| **MDiv\* Student Learning Outcomes***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.**\*As the MDiv is the core degree at RTS, the MDiv rubric will be used in this syllabus.* | **Rubric*** Strong
* Moderate
* Minimal
* None
 | **Mini-Justification** |
| **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 historical theology with oral (class discussion) and written (exams and papers) opportunities. |
| **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 | Students will spend a significant amount of time studying and meditating upon Scripture and historical interpretations of it. |
| **Reformed Theology** | Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.  | Strong | This class is fundamentally about teaching Reformed Theology, especially as found in the Westminster Standards. |
| **Sanctification** | Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student’s sanctification. | Strong | A deeper understanding of God’s Word promotes a deeper faith in and love for God. |
| **Desire for Worldview** | Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God. | Strong | This course is built upon the idea that the Bible functions as the spectacles through which we see ourselves and the world around us.  |
| **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 | The different traditions we examine will be treated charitably and evaluated through the grid of Scripture. Emphasis will be placed on maintaining a pastoral perspective throughout.  |
| **Preach** | Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm. | Moderate | Theology is necessary for good preaching, just as coaching is necessary for good swimming. One cannot advance very far in swimming without coaching, and one cannot advance very far in preaching without theology.  |
| **Worship** | Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service. | Moderate | Good theology is always doxological.  |
| **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. | Strong | Theology is also necessary for good pastoral skills. Right knowledge does not guarantee right living, but wrong knowledge does guarantee wrong living.  |
| **Church/World** | Ability to interact within a denominational context, within a broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues. | Moderate | Biblical bases for denominational distinctives are discussed to some degree.  |