

Systematic Theology

Christology, Soteriology, Eschatology

Meeting Information

Meeting Time: Tuesdays, 8:00 AM–12:00 PM (February 4 – May 12)

Meeting Place:

Contact Information

Prof.: D. Blair Smith (office: lower level in E building)

Office Phone: 704-366-5066 (x4223)^[117]_[SEP]

Email: bsmith@rts.edu

Hours: Wednesdays 1:00 PM–3:00 PM and by appointment

Teacher Assistant: Peter Leach (peterjleach@gmail.com)

Course Description

This course will systematically present biblical teaching on the topics of Christology, Soteriology, and Eschatology as understood and taught within the Reformed tradition, demonstrating that these formulations (1) represent the proper understanding of Scripture, (2) inherit and carry forward the best of the ancient teachings of the Church, and (3) provide the people of God the doctrine needed in order to thrive as disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ in the twenty-first century.

Course Objectives

1. To base all of our theology of the Christology, Soteriology, and Eschatology in God's revelation in Scripture.
2. To enable the student to better grasp related doctrines through familiarity with their exegetical and theological foundations, while also being acquainted with both relevant historical and contemporary discussions, so that they can clearly and confidently communicate them in preaching, teaching, and counseling.
3. To explore and appreciate the confessional expressions concerning these doctrines within the Reformed tradition, especially in the Westminster Standards.

Texts and Abbreviations

Summary (required)

RD: Herman Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics: Abridged in One Volume*, pp. 393-586; 693-777 (chapters 14-20; 23-25)

THS: Sinclair B. Ferguson, *The Holy Spirit*, pp. 11-56; 93-189; 241-255 (chapters 1-2; 5-8, 11)

ST: Douglas F. Kelly, *Systematic Theology, Volume 2; The Beauty of Christ: A Trinitarian Vision*, pp. 43-259; 295-340; 371-419; 501-513 (chapters 1-5, 7-8, 10, 12 (partial))

Confession (required)

WCF: *The Westminster Confession of Faith*^[L]_[SEP] (chapters 6-18, 32-33)

Supplemental Readings (required – available on Canvas)

SR: R. Michael Allen, "The Place of Justification in Christian Theology," in *Justification and the Gospel: Understanding the Contexts and Controversies*, pp. 3-31 (chapter 1)

Anselm of Canterbury, "Christ's Atonement for Sin," in *Readings in Christian Thought*, pp. 85-93

Richard Bauckham, "Eschatology," in *The Oxford Handbook of Systematic Theology*, pp. 306-321 (chapter 17)

Richard Gaffin, "The Work of Christ Applied" in *Christian Dogmatics: Reformed Theology for the Church Catholic*, pp. 268-290 (chapter 12)

Jonathan Gibson, "For Whom Did Christ Die? Particularism and Universalism in the Pauline Epistles" and "The Glorious, Indivisible, Trinitarian Work of God in Christ: Definite Atonement in Paul's Theology of Salvation," in *From Heaven He Came and Sought Her: Definite Atonement in Historical, Biblical, Theological, and Pastoral Perspective*, pp. 289-374 (chapters 12-13)

Benjamin L. Gladd and Matthew S. Harmon, *Making All Things New: Inaugurated Eschatology for the Life of the Church*, pp. 1-58 (chapters 1-3 – chapter 1 is written by G. K. Beale)

Michael Horton, "Eschatology," in *Mapping Modern Theology: A Thematic and Historical Introduction*, pp. 377-402 (chapter 15)

Richard Lints, "Soteriology," in *Mapping Modern Theology: A Thematic and Historical Introduction*, pp. 259-291 (chapter 11)

Donald Macleod, "The Work of Christ Accomplished" in *Christian Dogmatics: Reformed Theology for the Church Catholic*, pp. 243-267 (chapter 11)

Maximus the Confessor, "Opusculum 3," in *Maximus the Confessor*, pp. 192-198

Fred Sanders, "Introduction to Christology: Chalcedonian Categories for the Gospel Narrative," in *Jesus in Trinitarian Perspective: An Intermediate Christology*, pp. 1-43 (chapter 1)

Extra Credit

Read G. K. Beale's *A New Testament Biblical Theology: The Unfolding of the Old Testament in the New*, pp. 88-116; 129-160; 187-297; 651-749; 835-870 (chapters 3, 5, 7-9, 20-21, 25) and write a 5-7 page review = 20 points.

Requirements

1. Attend and be ready to participate in every class.

2. Complete the required reading for each week.

3. Reading Presentation (10%)

On each day of class (with the exception of the first and last classes) a student will give a reading report of approximately 500 words to the class. The report will (a) summarize one of that week's readings, and (b) will respond to the reading in a critical (positive or negative or questioning) manner. After presenting the report, the student should be prepared to answer questions/interact with his or her fellow students and the professor. There will be a sign up the first day of class to determine which student(s) goes on which week. It is likely most weeks will have more than one student present. Each student only presents once in the course of the semester. More details will be given in class.

4. Reading report (20%)

Attached to the second exam, students will turn in a reading report stating the percentage of the assigned readings that they have read with reasonable care over the course of the semester.

5. Term Paper (30%)

Students will write a 12-17 page term paper (typed and double-spaced, with appropriate footnoting and bibliography in Turabian style) on one of the topics treated in the course. Make sure you (1) present a clear thesis; (2) have a proper introduction and conclusion and a clear structure for your essay; (3) deal with the relevant information competently and fairly to all sides; (4) where necessary, engage primary sources; (5) offer critical analysis (and not merely summary) of the positions and views you engage; (6) where relevant, consider the implications and significance of your investigation for the life of the church; and (7) use at least 10 scholarly sources. If it would be helpful, please consult with the professor on initial bibliography. Your paper should be on one of the following topics:

- a. The Person of Christ in biblical perspective: One of the most promising developments in New Testament studies is the "Early High Christology" movement. Major players in this movement include Richard Bauckham and Larry Hurtado. Engage this movement, or one of its proponents, discussing both its potential contributions and shortcomings for developing a biblical understanding of the Person of Christ.
- b. Christological heresy: What is an ancient Christological heresy that continues to manifest itself? Explain this heresy theologically (including biblical texts to which it might have appealed), how the early Church addressed it, and ways it continues to have life in the understanding of some Christians. Include in your evaluation how this heresy has a deleterious effect in accurately presenting the biblical picture of, and bringing honor to, Christ.

- c. Jesus Christ's Humanity: Was it necessary, as some theologians have said (Karl Barth, TF Torrance, Edward Irving, etc.), that the humanity Christ assumed be "fallen"? Evaluate this position biblically and theologically. Through consultation with the professor, you could also explore some other aspect of Christ's humanity.
- d. "He descended into hell": Examine this line from the Apostles Creed exegetically and theologically. Compare and contrast Calvin's and the *Heidelberg Catechism's* position with that of the *Westminster Confession of Faith*. See also John Frame's discussion in his recent *Systematic Theology*. Which position best accounts for specific Scriptural texts (Acts 2, Ephesians 4, 1 Peter 3 and 4 etc.).
- e. "Incarnational Ministry": Theologically evaluate this increasingly popular ministry model. Use tools such as orthodox Christology, the doctrine of Union with Christ, and the ministry of the Holy Spirit in order to weigh whether this model presents a biblical framework for the ministry of the Church in the world.
- f. The doctrine of justification: In recent years, certain Protestant scholars and pastors have challenged the traditional Protestant doctrine of justification, suggesting that the Reformers misunderstood Paul's teaching on this topic. Engage one of these contemporary critics (e.g., N. T. Wright, James D. G. Dunn, a proponent of the "Federal Vision") and respond to their criticisms in light of biblical exegesis and the Reformed confessions.
- g. The relationship between justification and sanctification: What is the relationship between these two crucial doctrines? How do you demonstrate their relationship exegetically? How do they "fit together" theologically? How should they be brought to bear and emphasized in counseling and/or preaching?
- h. The doctrine of the atonement: Has the reformed tradition overemphasized penal substitutionary atonement? Is this doctrine equivalent to "divine child abuse," as some have suggested? Are there other biblical models of the atonement that deserve our attention? If so, how should they be situated vis-à-vis substitutionary atonement?
- i. The Holy Spirit and eschatology: How does the Holy Spirit giving of resurrection life relate to eschatology? How does this connect creation/Eden, the Temple, Christ/Church, and the New Creation? How does this work out personally and in the Church?
- j. The nature of hell: Contemporary evangelicals continue to debate both the possibility and nature of eternal punishment. Debated questions include: Who goes to hell, if anyone? How does our understanding of hell relate to our understanding of God's love and of Christ's atoning work? What is the nature of hell? Does hell involve eternal conscious punishment, or does hell simply annihilate unbelievers?
- k. Other topics/questions may be chosen in consultation with the professor.

***Due: May 12th**

6. Exams (40%)

Students will take two exams which will test your grasp of doctrinal topics covered in class lectures and readings as well as your ability to communicate doctrinal topics in a clear and cogent manner. The Midterm covers the first half of the course, and the Final covers the second half.

***Midterm Exam: March 30 - April 3 ~ *Final Exam: May 14-19**

Class Schedule, Reading Schedule, and Assignments

Class 1 - Tuesday, February 4

Topic: *Introduction: Covenant of Redemption*

RD: pp. 393-403 (chapter 14 [partial])

THS: pp. 11-33 (chapter 1)

ST: pp. 43-70 (chapter 1)

WCF: Chapters 6-8

***These should be read before the first day of class.**

Class 2 - Tuesday, February 11

Topic: *Christ in Scripture*

ST: pp. 71-100; 139-181 (chapters 2-3)

***Assignment:** Reading Presentation 1 (see details above)

Class 3 - Tuesday, February 18

Topic: *The Incarnation 1*

SR: Fred Sanders, "Introduction to Christology: Chalcedonian Categories for the Gospel Narrative," in *Jesus in Trinitarian Perspective: An Intermediate Christology*, pp. 1-43 (chapter 1)

ST: pp. 183-217 (chapter 4)

***Assignment:** Reading Presentation 2

Class 4 - Tuesday, February 25

Topic: *The Incarnation 2*

SR: Maximus the Confessor, "Opusculum 3," in *Maximus the Confessor*, pp. 192-198

THS: pp. 35-56 (chapter 2)

RD: pp. 403-412 (chapter 14 [partial])

ST: pp. 229-259 (chapter 5)

***Assignment:** Reading Presentation 3

Class 5 - Tuesday, March 3

Topic: *The Incarnation 3*

RD: pp. 412-422 (chapter 14 [partial])

ST: pp. 295-340 (chapters 7-8)

***Assignment:** Reading Presentation 4

Class 6 - Tuesday, March 10

Topic: *Redemption Accomplished 1*

RD: pp. 423-448 (chapter 15)

SR: Donald Macleod, "The Work of Christ Accomplished" in *Christian Dogmatics: Reformed Theology for the Church Catholic*, pp. 243-267 (chapter 11)

ST: pp. 371-419 (chapter 10)

***Assignment:** Reading Presentation 5

SPRING BREAK - March 17 - No Class

Class 7 - Tuesday, March 24

Topic: *Redemption Accomplished 2*

RD: pp. 449-469 (chapter 16)

SR: Anselm of Canterbury, "Christ's Atonement for Sin," in *Readings in Christian Thought*, pp. 85-93

Jonathan Gibson, "For Whom Did Christ Die? Particularism and Universalism in the Pauline Epistles" and "The Glorious, Indivisible, Trinitarian Work of God in Christ: Definite Atonement in Paul's Theology of Salvation," in *From Heaven He Came and Sought Her: Definite Atonement in Historical, Biblical, Theological, and Pastoral Perspective*, pp. 289-374 (chapters 12-13)

ST: pp. 501-513 (chapter 12 [partial])

***Assignment:** Reading Presentation 6

Class 8 - Tuesday, March 31

Topic: *Redemption Applied 1*

RD: pp. 473-503 (chapter 17)

THS: pp. 93-113 (chapter 5)

SR: Richard Gaffin, "The Work of Christ Applied" in *Christian Dogmatics: Reformed Theology for the Church Catholic*, pp. 268-290 (chapter 12)

Richard Lints, "Soteriology," in *Mapping Modern Theology: A Thematic and Historical Introduction*, pp. 259-291 (chapter 11)

WCF: Chapters 9-18

***Assignment:** Reading Presentation 7

***Take Midterm Exam between March 30 - April 3. It will cover Classes 1-7.**

Class 9 - Tuesday, April 7

Topic: *Redemption Applied 2*

RD: pp. 504-552 (chapters 18-19)

THS: pp. 115-138 (chapter 6)

***Assignment:** Reading Presentation 8

Class 10 - Tuesday, April 14

Topic: *Redemption Applied 3*

RD: pp. 553-570 (chapter 20 (partial))

SR: R. Michael Allen, "The Place of Justification in Christian Theology," in *Justification and the Gospel: Understanding the Contexts and Controversies*, pp. 3-31 (chapter 1)

***Assignment:** Reading Presentation 9

Class 11 - Tuesday, April 21

Topic: *Redemption Applied 4*

RD: pp. 570-586 (chapter 20 (partial))

THS: pp. 139-189 (chapters 7-8)

***Assignment:** Reading Presentation 10

Class 12 - Tuesday, April 28

Topic: *Introduction to Eschatology*

THS: 241-255 (chapter 11)

SR: Richard Bauckham, "Eschatology," in *The Oxford Handbook of Systematic Theology*, pp. 306-321 (chapter 17)

G. K. Beale, "The End Starts at the Beginning," in *Making All Things New: Inaugurated Eschatology for the Life of the Church*, pp. 1-14 (chapter 1)

Michael Horton, "Eschatology," in *Mapping Modern Theology: A Thematic and Historical Introduction*, pp. 377-402 (chapter 15)

WCF: Chapters 32-33

***Assignment:** Reading Presentation 11

Class 13 - Tuesday, May 5

Topic: *Last Things 1*

RD: pp. 693-748 (chapters 23-24)

SR: Benjamin L. Gladd and Matthew S. Harmon, "The Nature of the End-Time Church," in *Making All Things New: Inaugurated Eschatology for the Life of the Church*, pp. 15-35 (chapter 2)

***Assignment:** Reading Presentation 12

Class 14 - Tuesday, May 12

Topic: *Last Things 2*

RD: pp. 749-777 (chapter 25)

SR: Benjamin L. Gladd and Matthew S. Harmon, "Life in the Overlap of the Ages," in *Making All Things New: Inaugurated Eschatology for the Life of the Church*, pp. 37-58 (chapter 3)

***Assignment: Term Paper**

Last Day of Class

***The Final Exam will be taken during the exam period: May 14-19.**

For Further Reading

In addition to systematic theological works that would be helpful to consult, such as those by Calvin, Turretin, Hodge, Berkhof, Frame, and Bray, the following books will assist further study of the doctrinal topics discussed in this course.

- Khaled Anatolios, *Retrieving Nicaea: The Development and Meaning of Trinitarian Doctrine*
Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, 4 vols.
Richard Bauckham, *God Crucified: Monotheism and Christology in the New Testament*
G. C. Berkouwer, *Faith and Sanctification*
Michael Bird, Craig A. Evans, Simon J. Gathercole, Charles E. Hill, and Chris Tilling, *How God Became Jesus: The Real Origins of Belief in Jesus' Divine Nature*
Wilhelmus à Brakel, *The Christian's Reasonable Service*, 4 vols.
James Buchanan, *The Doctrine of Justification*
D. A. Carson, *The Difficult Doctrine of the Love of God*
Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2d edition
Gordon Fee, *Pauline Christology*
Richard B. Gaffin, "By Faith, Not By Sight": *Paul and the Order of Salvation*
Simon Gathercole, *Defending Substitution: An Essay on Atonement in Paul*
Edward R. Hardy, ed., *Christology of the Later Fathers*
Charles E. Hill and Frank A. James, III, eds., *The Glory of the Atonement: Biblical, Theological, and Practical Perspectives*
Grant Macaskill, *Union with Christ in the New Testament*
Donald Macleod, *Christ Crucified: Understanding the Atonement*
Richard Muller, *Calvin and the Reformed Tradition: On the Work of Christ and the Order of Salvation*
John Murray, *Redemption Accomplished and Applied*
Aidan Nicols, *Chalice of God: A Systematic Theology in Outline*
John Owen, *Brief Declaration and Vindication of the Doctrine of the Trinity* [includes a chapter, "Of the Satisfaction of Christ"] in *Works of John Owen*, vol. 2
John Owen, *Christologia* in *Works of John Owen*, vol. 1
John Owen, *Overcoming Sin and Temptation*, ed. Kelly M. Kapic and Justin Taylor
Robert A. Peterson, *Hell on Trial: The Case for Eternal Punishment*
J. C. Ryle, *Holiness: Its Nature, Hindrances, Difficulties, and Roots*
Friedrich Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith*
John Stott, *The Cross of Christ*
Kathryn Tanner, *Christ the Key*
J. van Genderen and W. H. Velema, *Concise Reformed Dogmatics*
Cornelis P. Venema, *But for the Grace of God: An Exposition of the Canons of Dort*
_____. *The Promise of the Future*
Herman Witsius, *The Economy of the Covenants Between God and Man*
N. T. Wright, *The Resurrection of the Son of God*

Class Policies

1. On Laptops and Smartphones in Class

It is my recommendation that you take notes by hand using the hardcopy outlines I will provide before class. If you have a strong inclination to use your laptop, please put your word processing program in “full screen” mode or use the “do not disturb” function so that other applications on your computer do not grab your attention (Facebook, Twitter, etc.).

Please keep your smartphone in your pocket on vibrate. If you do not have a pocket, please put it facedown on your desk. Only check them on breaks or if you are receiving repeated notifications indicating an emergency.

2. Internet Policy

RTS Charlotte recognizes how essential it is for students to have reliable, campus-wide access to the internet. For that reason, we have made Wi-Fi available for our student body, not only in the library and student lounges, but also in the classrooms. We know that students need to use the internet to download class materials, access files on the Cloud, and locate other important information. However, we also recognize that internet access in the classroom provides opportunity for abuse and misuse. Some students have unfortunately used their internet access to engage in many activities that distract them from the classroom lectures (e.g., surfing the web, checking sports scores, playing games). Not only does such activity hamper a student’s own seminary education, but it distracts other students who can easily view the screens of nearby students. In addition, donors and classroom guests (who often sit in the back) can see this inappropriate internet usage, which reflects poorly on RTS. Classroom etiquette includes leaving cell phones turned off, refraining from surfing the Internet or playing computer games or other distracting activities. In addition, students must respect standards set by individual professors regarding the use of technology during their class.

In order to address this issue, we must appeal to the integrity of the students as ones who are preparing for a lifetime of ministry to Christ and his church. We expect each student to take personal responsibility for proper classroom technology usage and to encourage others around them to do the same. All RTS-Charlotte students are accountable to the policies stated in the Student Handbook and Academic Catalog and are therefore expected to use technology in the classroom only for appropriate class-related activities. Student conduct is under the supervision of the Dean of Students.

3. Procedures for taking your Exams:

- a. Install the LockDown Browser application on the computer you intend to use for exams, prior to sitting for the exam, using this link:
<http://www.respondus.com/lockdown/download.php?id=998253613>
 - i. This link is ONLY for RTS students and covers both Mac and Windows applications.
 - ii. Be sure that you are able to login to your Canvas account from the LockDown Browser before scheduling a time to take your exam.
 - iii. The LockDown Browser application is already installed on the computers in the RTS Charlotte library. (Note that if you elect to use the library computers, your proctor must still be present throughout the duration of the exam.)

- b. Make arrangements with a proctor to supervise the exam within the date timeframe set by the professor. The proctor cannot be a family member, current RTS student (current = taken a class within the past year but not yet graduated), or member of the library staff. Typical proctors are pastors or church staff members. For your convenience, there will be several on-campus proctor blocks where a proctor will be available to supervise your exam. Dates and times will be posted on Canvas and announced in the weekly Semper. The final exam period is also published on the schedule for this term posted throughout campus.

- c. If you are taking the exam off-campus with a proctor, send your proctor the “RTS Charlotte Proctor Expectations” document which can be found on the Canvas Course homepage. The proctor must observe student taking exam and ensure that there are no devices or resources available other than the computer being used for the exam.

- d. Access the exam during the date window specified for that exam:
 - i. Start the LockDown Browser application using a wired or known reliable WIFI connection. We do not recommend using restaurant or coffee shop WIFI to take exams.
 - ii. Login to your Canvas account using your Self-Service username and password. If you need to reset your Self-Service password, you may do so at <https://selfservice.rts.edu>.
 - iii. Navigate to the exam. You will not be able to access the exam with a standard web browser. For additional details on using LockDown Browser, review this [Student Quick Start Guide \(PDF\)](#).
 - iv. Time clock will begin once you open the exam.
 - v. Exam must be completed in one sitting. You may not exit and return to exam later.
 - vi. The exam will contain questions requiring the proctor contact information, an honor pledge, and certification that your proctor was present during the entire exam period.

- e. Proctors may be contacted to verify information regarding exam administration.

- f. In the rare case of a technical issue (for example, if internet service goes out during exam), the proctor should contact the course TA. While the TA's may not be immediately available, the date and time of the email will document when the issue was reported. Please have your TA's contact information available for your proctor before opening the exam. Once you open the exam using the LockDown Browser, you will not be able to access other programs on your computers.

**Course Objectives Related to MDiv Student Learning Outcomes
With Mini-Justification**

Course: ST5200
 Professor: D. Blair Smith
 Campus: Charlotte
 Date: Spring 2020

<u>MDiv Student Learning Outcomes</u>		<u>Rubric</u>	<u>Mini-Justification</u>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 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	Students are required to express and articulate views based on readings, research, and class lectures, while incorporating their own viewpoints.
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	The emphases of this course, Christology, Soteriology, and Eschatology, each find their explanation by returning to the Scriptures for understanding.
Reformed Theology	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Strong	Although Scripture is the primary voice in this course, much of it is interpreted in the light of reformed theology, and backed up by the Westminster Standards.
Sanctification	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Strong	Students will not only learn theological truths about Christ, salvation, and the end times, but will also be taught how to view each of these in a biblically sound perspective.
Worldview	Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God. Includes ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.	Moderate	Seeing life through the lens of an accurate understanding of Christology, Soteriology, and Eschatology affects everything that we do.
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	While other views are considered, engaged, and expounded, this course focuses on Reformed Theology without alienating those who disagree.
Pastoral Ministry	Ability to minister the Word of God to hearts and lives of both church and unchurched, to include preaching, teaching, leading in worship, leading and shepherding the local congregation, aiding in spiritual maturity, concern for non-Christians.	Moderate	The content of this class will help students to better exegete the Word, and gives them a framework in which to understand it, making them stronger preachers and ministers of theological truth.