Course Description

In 1544, Emperor Charles V called for the Diet of the Holy Roman Empire to meet at Speyer. Martin Bucer, Strasburg reformer, urged Calvin to write a statement of the doctrines and necessity for the Reformation. What emerged was Calvin’s *The Necessity for Reforming the Church*, a book which Calvin’s friend and successor, Theodore Beza, thought the most powerful and important book of his time. What was Calvin’s chief concern? Worship!

This course will investigate as many of the issues of worship as time will permit. The canvas is vast: what does the Bible teach about worship? How are we to integrate both Old and New Testament materials for the church today? What does church history teach us? What are the issues facing the church today?

Course Purpose

“Theology of Worship” examines historic Christian ministry and worship according to the Reformed tradition.

*What will we aim to do in this course specifically?*

Give you the biblical foundations of worship. Convince you that that gathered worship is legitimate, necessary, and important and should be conducted biblically in both form and content. Address the crucial matters of music, congregational singing, contextualization, “worship styles” and more. The goal is to prepare you to be biblical worshippers, and to prepare you to help others be biblical worshippers, and to prepare you to be effective leaders in worship.

Course Objectives

1. To acquaint the student with the relevant materials of biblical and historical debate on worship
2. To facilitate the student to become a leader of worship that is both dignified and sensitive to current cultural norms
3. To engage the student in debate over issues currently of major controversy within the Reformed churches

Contact Information

Professor: Rev. J. Ligon Duncan III, PhD

**Campus Office:** 601.923.1656 and Ext 1656

**Executive Assistant:** Jan Hyde

*If you would like discuss matters related to this course or future ministry, please contact my assistant to set up an appointment.*

Teaching Assistant: Tony Doggett  tdoggett@rts.edu

*If you have any questions related to the details of this course, its assignments, or with Canvas, please contact my teaching assistant.*
Academic Integrity
All work submitted must be the student’s own. Group-produced work is not permitted in this course. Plagiarism and copying of old assignments are considered cheating. Students who do not fulfill assignments with requisite academic integrity will be referred to the Academic Dean with a recommendation for discipline (the student should also consult p. 48 in the 2019-2021 RTS Catalog for further details).

Class Methodology

A. Lectures and Attendance
Many of these sessions will be in the form of seminars, to facilitate classroom discussion. Attendance, therefore, is an absolute requirement. Given the huge amount of material we have to cover and the relative scarcity of classroom hours, attendance will be at a premium and, of course, to the benefit of the student. If you need to miss a class or to leave early or to arrive late, you should seek permission (via my TA, my EA or myself). Failure to attend class, or to engage while in the class, will be noted. No unexplained absences.

B. Reading Assignments

1. Required Texts:
   Terry Johnson, Leading in Worship, Revised and Expanded, Tolle Lege Press, 2013. (LiW)

   A suggested reading schedule has been posted in Canvas to assist you.

2. Recommended Texts:
   Carson, Ashton, Hughes, Keller, Worship By The Book. Zondervan, 2002 (AHK)
   Bard Thompson, Liturgies of the Western Church. Fortress Press, 1980 (LofWC)
   _______ Calls to Worship, Christian Focus Publications, 2008
C. Practical Requirement (60%)

1. **Written Prayers.** (20%)

   The practice of extemporary praying is a good one and one for which our Puritan and Presbyterian forefathers fought hard to maintain. But even these traditions called for what they termed “studied prayers”: prayers that had been planned and thought through and then delivered without notes. Please follow this format exactly: Font size 10, Times New Roman, single spaced, 1/2” margins. One page exactly (no more, no less). Prayers must be submitted via Canvas on the dates listed below and in Canvas. **In addition to a written prayer,** provide a paragraph on another page explaining what it is you hope to accomplish in this prayer. Is it thematic? Is it based on some texts of Scripture?

   *How should I go about writing these prayers?* (from Derek Thomas)

   I suggest you take a Psalm and meditate on it. Then begin to formulate the ideas and word structures of the psalm, adapting them for suitability in 20th century parlance. Follow the order of thought in the psalm where appropriate. Grading someone’s prayers poses some problems. Still, a measure of objectivity will be attempted. Grading will depend on such things as style, wording, biblical content, structure.

   Although I have not required these texts, I do recommend that you purchase the following books to assist you in public prayer. They will prove to be invaluable to most of you.


2. **Order of Service/Bulletin** (20%)

   The student will create six complete Worship Bulletins/orders of service. One bulletin for each of the following service types is to be submitted:

   1.) Funeral
   2.) Lord’s Supper
   3.) Baptism
   4.) Profession of Faith
   5.) Wedding
   6.) Regular Lord’s Day morning/evening services.

   A “Worship Guide” is also expected for each worship order of service. In the guide you will explain the reasons you structured the service the way you did, include reference to historical Presbyterian worship, scriptural basis, elements, forms, circumstances, and rubric etc. Be sure to integrate your worship order, structure, hymn selection, and texts. If you choose to disagree with the philosophy of worship articulated in this course, you must provide a full justification for that in your “worship guide.”
3. **Short Essays (20%)**

In order to assist you in your own preparation for ordination, ministry, and life, as well as to provide a meaningful outlet for interaction with the materials, philosophies, and issues in this course each student will submit the following **three essays**:

1. Compare and contrast the historic “Regulative Principle of Worship” with other philosophies of worship. The student will include the history, key proponents, biblical basis, and difficulties of each view.
2. Discuss the use and views of church liturgy, the “church calendar,” and “contextualization” from a biblical as well as historical-theological standpoint. The student will be sure to include benefits and difficulties with various understandings and practices.

The best essays will include copious use of Scripture, theologians, and creedal statements. Be sure to make reference to and interact with both the lectures and assigned readings for this course.

**Format:** Please submit your essays using standard formatting (Size 12 font, Times New Roman, single-spaced, one-inch margins, page numbers). All papers must conform to Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, Eighth Edition. Essays shall not to exceed **three single-spaced pages**.

**Collection of Assignments**

Unless otherwise noted, all assignments shall be submitted via the appropriate Canvas upload link.

**Late Work**

Students should make every effort to turn in work on time or early. In the rare case of medical or other providential emergency, extensions and/or alternative arrangements may be granted. In most cases, late assignments will be accepted but penalized one letter grade per day. Please make these arrangements with the TA as soon as possible.

**D. Comprehensive Final Exam (30%)**

The final exam will cover the lecture and reading material in a comprehensive way. Students can expect to be asked both factual and integrative questions. Students can expect to be asked examination questions on all of the reading material.

**E. Topical Discussion Questions and Student to Student Interactions (10%)**

Students must answer all topical discussion questions and respond to all student-to-student interactions in Canvas. Your posts will need to be relatively substantive which includes a good faith effort to interact with the discussion question and with your classmates. Please see due dates in Canvas for each topical discussion question and student-to-student interaction.
Course Outline and Assignment Schedule – Remote Live

Listed below are the dates and topics and weekly assignment timetable due dates for our course. Please factor these into your term calendar now.

Schedule and Due Dates Summary

The class is scheduled to meet for eight sessions via Zoom from 9 am – 12 pm Eastern Time on Monday, Aug. 31, Sept. 14, Sept. 21, Sept. 28, Oct. 5, Oct. 26, Nov. 2, and Nov. 9, 2020 during the Fall 2020 term. The Zoom links will be posted in Canvas.

All assignments are due on the dates posted below by 11:59 pm Eastern Time. Assignments received after this time will be considered late and penalized accordingly (up to 1 letter grade per day). Assignments shall not be emailed to the TA, but rather uploaded to Canvas in pdf format.

1. September 8, 2020 – Written Prayer 1 – Justification
2. September 14, 2020 – Written Prayer 2 – Adoption
4. September 28, 2020 – Written Prayer 4 – Confession of Sin
5. October 5, 2020 – Essay 1 Due: Compare and contrast the historic “Regulative Principle of Worship” with other philosophies of worship. The student will include the history, key proponents, biblical basis, and difficulties of each view.
6. October 12, 2020 – Written Prayer 5 – Imprecatory
7. October 19, 2020 – Essay 2 Due: Discuss the use and views of church liturgy, the “church calendar” and “contextualization” from a biblical as well as historical-theological standpoint. The student should include benefits and difficulties with various understandings and practices.
8. October 26, 2020 – Written Prayer 6 – Pastoral Prayer
9. November 2, 2020 – Bulletins (Order of Service) due:
   1.) Regular Lord’s Day morning/evening services
   2.) Funeral
   3.) Wedding
10. November 9, 2020 – Bulletins (Order of Service) due:
    1.) Profession of Faith
    2.) Lord’s Supper
    3.) Baptism
11. November 16, 2020 – Written Prayer 7 – Invocation
14. December 10-15, 2020 – Final Exam. All reading must be finished by the final exam
# Course Objectives Related to 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Mini-Justification</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Articulation</strong> (oral &amp; written)</td>
<td>Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, and cultural/global information, including details, concepts, and frameworks. Also includes ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Scripture</strong></td>
<td>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.)</td>
<td>Strong</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Reformed Theology</strong></td>
<td>Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
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<td><strong>Sanctification</strong></td>
<td>Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student’s sanctification.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Desire for Worldview</strong></td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Winsomely Reformed</strong></td>
<td>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.)</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Pastoral Ministry</strong></td>
<td>Ability to minister the Word of God to hearts and lives of both churched and unchurched, to include preaching, teaching, leading in worship, leading, and shepherding the local congregation, aiding in spiritual maturity, concern for non-Christians.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
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