**REFORMED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY**

**Fall Semester 2020**

**ECCLESIOLOGY AND SACRAMENTS**

For various reasons the doctrines of the Church and the Gospel Sacraments have often been relegated to an incidental place in evangelical theology. Often their positive importance has been diminished.

Yet both in Scripture and in the history of the people of God the role of the church and the signs of the gospel have been central elements in Christian faith and thought. Against the background of biblical teaching, we will briefly explore what that significance is.

In our study of Ecclesiology we will focus attention on certain aspects of the biblical material which forms the groundwork of the doctrine, with a view to understanding how the perspectives on the church given to us in redemptive historical revelation impact both our theology and praxis in the area of ecclesiology.

In relation to the Sacraments our goal is to gain both a clear biblical-theological understanding of their significance and also a sense of their importance in the life of both the individual believer and the gospel community. To complement the class work reading in the appended texts should be completed.

**Course Requirements**

In addition to the instruction given in the lectures, a number of works on the church are listed as core reading, in addition to the variety of other works listed and materials that may be mentioned in class. The course will be graded on the basis of:

1. **Paper**: A research paper, no more than 15 pages should be submitted by the date set in the Seminary Calendar. This may be on any topic related to the syllabus. It should show evidence of thoughtful and relevant choice of topic, clear understanding of the biblical and theological issues involved, careful research and an ability to analyze and critique as well as trace the lines of a positive biblical doctrine in the specific area of ecclesiology chosen for research. Special attention should be paid to clarity and accuracy in writing.

**(ii) Examination**: An examination will be held at the end of the course.

1. **Reading:** A list of specific texts to be read and a variety of more general readings on the church and sacraments from varying theological perspectives is appended.

**Texts on Ecclesiology**

H. Bavinck: *Reformed Dogmatics*, vol. 4. Pp. 273-460

J. Calvin: *Institutes*, Book IV, chapters 1-13

E.P. Clowney: *The Church*

**In addition, consulting the following works from a massive range of material will provide a variety of perspectives on the church.**

Gregg R Allison: *Sojourners and Strangers: The Doctrine of the Church*

R.J. Banks: *Paul's Idea of Community*

D. Bannerman: *The Scripture Doctrine of the Church*

J. Bannerman: *The Church of Christ*

G.C. Berkouwer: *The Church*

G. Bray *The Church: A Theological and Historical Account*

D.A. Carson (ed): *The Church in the Bible and the World*

J.N.D. Kelly: *Early Christian Doctrines*

H. Kung: *The Church*

R.B. Kuiper: *The Glorious Body of Christ*

G.McGregor:  *Corpus Christi*

J.Moltmann:  *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*

E.S.Morgan:  *Visible Saints*

J.Owen:  *True Nature of a Gospel Church (Works*, 16: 2-208)

G.Vos: *The Kingdom of God and the Church*

**Texts on Sacraments:**

H. Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics*, 4:461-588

G.C. Berkouwer: *The Sacraments*, 90‑187;

John Calvin: *Institutes* Book IV, chapters 14-19

**In addition, the following brief selection of works (again from a massive range of material) provide differing perspectives on baptism and the Supper.**

R. Bruce: *The Mystery of the Lord's Supper*

Paul K Jewett: *Infant Baptism and the Covenant of Grace* (Credobaptist)

I.H.Marshall: *Last Supper, Lord's Supper*.

J. Murray: *Christian Baptism* (Paedobaptist)

*Collected Writings* 2, 366-384.

**ECCLESIOLOGY AND SACRAMENTS**

**SYLLABUS of LECTURES**

**Introduction:**

The doctrine of the church today:

i. Historical

ii. Theological

**I. THE BUILDING OF THE CHURCH**

**1. The foundation of the church in the promise of Christ, Matt.16:18**

i. Programmatic words

ii. Controverted statement

iii. Point to church's centrality

(a) Son of Man imagery

(b) Community goal

(c) Community language

(d) Community rites

(e) parabolic teaching

**2. The Church Jesus builds**

i. The meaning of *ekklēsia*

**3. Church and Kingdom**

i. Central message of Jesus

ii. Relationship of kingdom and church

(a) Sphere in which kingdom is manifested

(b) Instrument of kingdom

**4. The "Peter Saying"**

i. In Christian interpretation

ii. In R.C. argument

iii. Response

iv. The "keys"

**5. The Pattern of Church building**

i. Mk.1:13-14 prototype

ii. The significance of Pentecost

(a) Promise and Fulfillment

(b) New covenant life in the Spirit

(c) Transcending of Mosaic economy

(d) Typical gives way to antitypical

(e) Mediation of many and the mediation of One

(f) Dawning of the "last days"

iii. The pattern in Acts

(a) Christ displays kingdom power

(b) Christ defends and comforts his people

(c) Christ directs his people in the great mission

iv. The effects in:

(a) Growth

(b) Government

(c) Marks

**II. THE NATURE OF THE CHURCH**

**1. Church as fulfillment of covenant community**

i. Saints

ii. Elect and beloved

iii. Called

iv. Flock

**2. Church as the assembly of Christ**

i. By Christ the assembly is opened

ii. Through the Spirit the assembly is internationally convened

iii. In assembly the Lord is present

iv. At the *parousia* the assembly is consummated

**3. Church manifested in multi-dimensional way**

i. Universal *ekklesia*

ii. Local *ekklesia*

**4. Central designations of the Church**

**i. Bride of Christ**

(a) Love and provision

(b) Eschatological destiny

**ii. Temple building**

(a) Pillar and ground of truth

(b) Temple built in Christ

(c) Climaxes pattern of revelation

(d) Involves transformation in constitution

(e) Exhibits attributes of God

(f) The Upbuilding of the Church

*Extensive-Missionary*

Prayer

Practical assistance

Life-style

Mission activity

*Intensive-inbuilding*

In stability

To maturity

**iii. The People/Family of God**

(a) In O.T.

(b) In N.T.

Chosen and blessed community

Trans-ethnic community

Holy community

Military community

Pilgrim community

Alien community

**iv. The body of Christ**

(a) Pauline metaphor

(b) Source of idea?

(c) *Kephale* as head

Practical implications of ownership

Kingdom principles pertain

Gifts received

Union with Christ as foundational to church

**III. LEADERSHIP, ORGANIZATION and MINISTRY in the CHURCH**

1. **Organization in Gospels**

**2. Organization in Acts**

i. The apostles

ii. The seven

iii. The elders

**3. Eldership**

i. Ministry

(a) Guardianship

(b) Nourishment

ii. Qualifications

(a) Personal qualities

(b) Spiritual gifts

**4. Diaconate**

i. The seven in Acts 6?

ii. Qualifications

iii. Deaconesses?

iii. Role of Widows?

**6. The standing "offices" in the church**

**7. Inter-relatedness of church**

i. Indications of connectionalism in NT

ii. Development of hierarchy in later church life

iii. Reformation restoration

**IV. THE WORSHIP OF THE CHURCH**

1. **Survey of Worship in the Old Testament**
2. Eden
3. Patriarchal Period
4. Mosaic Administration
5. Synagogue
6. **New Testament**
7. In the teaching of Jesus
8. Post Pentecost
9. Christo-Mediated and Trinitarian

**V. ATTRIBUTES AND MARKS OF THE CHURCH**

**1. Unity**

i. NT emphasis

ii. Nature of unity

iii. Divisions in church

**2. Catholicity**

i. Meaning of term

ii. In NT

**3. Sanctity**

i. Redemptive-historical/eschatological character

ii. In R.C. teaching

**4. Apostolicity**

i. Interpreted historically

1. Doctrinal

**Marks: 1.**  Reformation understanding

**2.** In Acts 2:42ff.

**VI. THE SACRAMENTS**

1. Terminology in history of the church
2. Foundations for a Definition

3. The number of sacraments

4. Signs and Seals

5. Validity

6. Efficacy and necessity

**VII. BAPTISM**

1. The warrant for baptism

2. Significance

3. Mode

4. Subjects

5. Role

**VIII. THE LORD'S SUPPER**

1. Institution

2. Significance

3. Meaning

4. The presence of Christ

5. Benefits

6. Participation

7. Conclusion