**Advanced Readings in Herman Bavinck (2hr)**

**Course Lecturer:** Dr. Cory Brock (coryb@fpcjackson.org)

**Course Time/Location**: Fridays 1pm-3pm/

**Description:** This course is a weekly seminar style discussion of some of the most significant dogmatic and philosophical sections in the corpus of Herman Bavinck. Many of the chosen tests are meant to expose students to lesser read portions of Bavinck. The purpose of this course is to slow down and critically engage with the details of Bavinck’s theology and philosophy and do so in the light of the modern-theological context. That means that this course will aid the student in becoming a better theologian, a critical thinker, and conversant with the development of theology in modernity and post-modernity through the deep study of one theologian.

**Class Format:** This course will be in the format of a post-graduate seminar. The lecturer will introduce the materials and relevant biographical and theological context briefly and then the class will discuss the primary texts together in detail for the remainder of the time. In class, everyone is expected to participate. It is necessary to have a copy of the weekly primary reading in class and be prepared with notes/questions/comments.

**Assignments:** There are only two graded assignments for this course:

1. Weekly participation in class discussions @ 20%.
2. A course essay @ 80%.

**The Course Essay:** The essay is a research paper using Herman Bavinck’s corpus as the primary text. Each student will come up with their own question that they seek to answer in their essay. The question should be narrow enough to answer thoroughly. Each question must be approved by the instructor well in advance of the due date. The essay is due on Dec. 7th. The essay must be a minimum of 3000 words and engage with 10 secondary sources in addition to the primary texts. Turabian footnotes are required. No bibliography is necessary. No cover page is necessary. Include a title and at least 3 labeled sections within the paper (ex. Introduction, Conclusion and titles in between that lay out the paper in a sensible way). Time will be spent in the course on how to write an excellent essay.

The instructor will produce a list of secondary sources near the start of the course.

**Required Texts (either must own or have access to):**

* Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics I-IV* (Baker Academic, 2003-2008).
* Bavinck, *Christian Worldview* (Crossway, 2019).
* Bavinck, *Philosophy of Revelation* (Hendrickson, 2018).
* Bavinck, *Essays on Religion, Science, and Society* (Baker Academic, 2008).
* Bavinck’s individually published essays: see <https://sources.neocalvinism.org/bavinck/?tp=all>

**Reading Schedule:** All reading should be completed prior to class (readings subject to change).

**Week 1: The Early Essays**

* “Conscience,” 1881 (14 pgs).
* “Kingdom of God, the Highest Good,” 1881 (38 pgs).
* “The Pros and Cons of a Dogmatic System,” 1881 (14 pgs).

**Week 2: The Early Essays cntd.**

* “The Catholicity of Christianity and the Church,” 1888 (33 pgs).
* “Eloquence” in *Herman Bavinck on Preaching and Preachers*, 1889.
* “Theology and Religious Studies” in *Essays on Science…* 1892 (11 pgs).

**Week 3: Early Essays Cntd.**

* “General Biblical Principles and the Relevance of the Concrete Mosaic Law for the Social Question Today” 1891 (11 pgs).
* “The Future of Calvinism,” 1894 (24 pgs).
* “Common Grace,” 1894 (27 pgs).

**Week 4: Matters of Prolegomena**

* RD 1, Chapter 7, 8

**Week 5: Prolegomena Cntd.**

* RD 1, Chapter 9, 10, 11

**Week 6: Prolegomena Cntd.**

* RD 1, Chapter 13

**Week 7: God and Creation**

* RD 2, Chapters 1, 2, and “The Importance of Trinitarian Dogma,” pg. 329-334.

**Week 8: Christian Worldview**

**Week 9: Readings in PoR**

* Chapters 1-3

**Week 10: Readings in PoR**

* Chapters 4-7

**Week 11: Readings in PoR**

* Chapters 8-10

**Week 12: Later Essays**

* “The Essence of Christianity,” 1906, in *Essays on Religion, Science, and Society*, (15 pgs).
* “Christian Principles and Social Relationships,” 1908, in *Essays on Religion, Science, and Society*, (25 pgs).
* “Calvin and Common Grace,” 1909 (31 pgs).

**Week 13: Later Essays**

* “Modernism and Orthodoxy,” 1911 (41 pgs).
* “Christianity and Natural Science,” 1913 in *Essays* (23 pgs).

**Week 14: Later Essays**

* “Of Beauty and Aesthetics,” 1914 in *Essays* (15 pgs).
* “Ethics and Politics,” 1916 in *Essays* (16 pgs).