Course Description
This course is a study of Covenant Theology from exegetical, theological and historical perspectives. Covenant theology is the Bible’s way of explaining and deepening our understanding of (1) the atonement; (2) our assurance; (3) the sacraments; (4) the continuity of redemptive history; and (5) Dynamic of God’s sovereignty and Christian responsibility/piety. The doctrine of the covenants is thus important for both Reformed systematic and biblical theology (the study of special revelation from the standpoint of redemptive history).

The course will survey the successive biblical covenants from a redemptive historical perspective as well as examine the bi-covenantal structure of creation and redemption. Consideration will be given to issues such as the relation of the Old and New Testaments, the significance of the covenants for the doctrine of the atonement, for understanding sacramental theology, the implications of Covenant Theology for Reformed hermeneutics and more. Emphasis will be placed on the role of the Biblical doctrine of the covenants for preaching and pastoral ministry.

Course Objectives
To assist the student in mastering an outline of the covenantal structure of redemptive history and to help him/her begin to grasp the manifold implications of the Biblical doctrine of the covenants (for soteriology and especially the atonement, sacraments, evangelism, family life, ecclesiology, and more). The course will also aim to equip the student with a working knowledge of the history of Covenant Theology and some of the more important objections to Covenant Theology from its theological critics.

Contact Information
Ligon Duncan, PhD – John E. Richards Professor of Systematic and Historical Theology, Chancellor of RTS
Email: lduncan@rts.edu

RTS Jackson Office: Horace H. Hull Administration Building
5422 Clinton Boulevard
Jackson, MS 39209
Phone 601.923.1656
Executive Assistant Jan Hyde: jhyde@rts.edu

Assisting me to facilitate this course will be my RTS Jackson TA:
Tony Doggett Email: tdoggett@rts.edu

All assignments must be submitted via Canvas in pdf format. Tony is available to answer questions for you about logistical matters related to the course.

Course Requirements
Required Texts:
Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* [pp. 211-218; pp. 262-301]; 978-0802838209
J. Ligon Duncan III, *Covenant Theology* 978-1-938435-21-8 (iBook)
O.Palmer Robertson, *Christ of the Covenants*; 978-0875524184 (all)

Syllabus Articles (located on Canvas):
Donald Macleod, *Covenant Theology* in DSCH&T, 214-218
Donald Macleod, *Covenant: 2 in Banner of Truth [BoT]* 141:22-28
Donald Macleod, *The Lord's Supper as a Means of Grace* in BoT 64:16-22
Donald Macleod, *Qualifications for Communion* in BoT 65:14-20
Donald Macleod, *The Real Presence* in BoT 66:13-16
*Westminster Confession of Faith 7*: Of God's Covenant with Man
*Larger Catechism* Questions 20-22, and 30-36 *Shorter Catechism* Questions 12, 16, & 20
Online Lectures (Available but not required)
Online lectures may be accessed from the following address to assist the student in the class: https://subsplash.com/reformtheosem/lb/ms/+635a671.

Class Attendance
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. My TA will take roll at every class. 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.

Academic Integrity
All work submitted must be the student’s own. Group-produced work is not permitted. Plagiarism and copying of old assignments are all 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 pp. 33-34 in the Handbook for further details).

Technology Use
Laptop computers may not be used during this course. Students desiring to use a laptop for note-taking purposes only may request an application for permission to do so.

Course Evaluation
1. Reading and Course Notebook (20%) Each student will keep a course notebook to reflect his studies in the course as well as provide the basis for future study or teaching opportunities. Please see the directions below for completing this assignment.

2. Doctrinal Précis’ (15%) Please see the last page for details.

3. Quizzes (15%) The student should prepare for and expect a quiz over the reading that is due on select days throughout the semester. These quizzes will be taken through the Canvas website. You may not use any assistance such as, but not limited to, notes, textbooks, books, Bible, etc.

4. Final Examination (50%) The Exam will cover reading and lecture material from the whole of the course. Further details will be given.

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.

Instructions for Course Notebook
The notebook assignment is designed to reward students for their labors in engaging in the classroom and in assigned reading, and to provide them with a study guide for the final exam—as well as a permanent reference resource for studying and teaching Covenant Theology in the future. The Course Notebook will be submitted as a single PDF document on Canvas. All legibly-written handwritten classroom notes will need to be scanned and placed in the course notebook. While you may not use a computer during class lecture to take notes, you may type your notes afterward to place in the course notebook.
1. **Lecture notes Assignment:**
Inclusion of the student’s lecture notes (*typed or neatly scripted*) from the classroom lectures in the course notebook will enable the instructor to gauge the quality of listening and comprehension, and notetaking (and make adjustments in delivery or content beneficial for students).

2. **Reading Notes Assignment:**
Please include your typed notes taken on the reading of Belcher (see pages under required texts), Berkhof (see pages under required texts), Macleod (all readings), and Waters, Reid & Muether (see pages under required texts).

3. **Westminster Confession of Faith (WCF) Outline Assignment:**
This project calls for the student to develop a robust, *typed*, outline of the *assigned* chapter of the WCF (chapter 7). Aim for a one-page single-spaced outline, and include references to the Scripture proofs under each section of the chapter.

4. **Geerhardus Vos Biblical Theology Synopsis**
The student will produce a two-page single-spaced typed synopsis of Geerhardus Vos, *Biblical Theology*. The synopsis should be in outline form or in abbreviated narrative, should aim to enumerate the key points in Part One and Part Two of the text, and should be as compact and lucid as possible. The goal of the synopsis is for the student to accurately reproduce the flow of the book’s argument and its main thrust and points. The synopsis should begin with a paragraph-length statement of the book’s thesis and conclusion. Then, an outline of the assigned contents should follow. The student may also want to create a list of the best quotes, and points of weakness or disagreement.

**Due Dates Summary**
- **Sept. 24** Précis on Covenant of Works
- **Oct. 15** Précis on Covenant of Grace
- **Oct. 22** Précis on Covenant of Redemption
- **Oct. 29** Précis on Covenant Theology
- **Nov. 19** Course Binder/Notebook due
- **Dec. 10** Final Exam

**Collection of Assignments**
All assignments are due by 11:59 PM Central Time of the assigned day. Assignments received after this time will be considered late and penalized accordingly. Assignments are not to be emailed to the TA, but rather uploaded to the corresponding Canvas module.

**About the Teacher**
For inquiring minds who want to know, I taught full-time at RTS from June 1990- July 1996 and then became the Minister of the historic First Presbyterian Church (1837), Jackson, Mississippi in August of 1996. In 2013, I was called to serve as the Chancellor and CEO of Reformed Theological Seminary. At the beginning of 2014, I assumed that role fully as I transitioned from full-time ministry at First Presbyterian Church over to full-time leadership at RTS.

I am a native of Greenville, South Carolina, and was born and reared in a Christian home (a ninth generation Southern Presbyterian to be precise!). I am a graduate of Furman University, Greenville, SC (BA); Covenant Theological Seminary, St. Louis (MDiv, MA); and the University of Edinburgh, Scotland (PhD). I have been here in Jackson for over 25 years now.

My wife, Anne (who is a graduate of Furman University, BA; Gordon-Conwell Seminary, MRE; and Reformed Theological Seminary, MA [MFT]) is an accomplished Christian Educator in her own right, and is the loving mother of our daughter, Sarah Kennedy, and son, Jennings.
Houston, TX  Class Outline and Schedule (Central Time)

ON-SITE CLASS LECTURES

Thursday, August 26, 2021  4:00 pm - 9:30 pm Central Time
Friday, August 27, 2021  4:00 pm - 9:30 pm Central Time
Saturday, August 28, 2021  9:00 am - 1:00 pm Central Time
Thursday, September 16, 2021  4:00 pm – 9:30 pm Central Time
Friday, September 17, 2021  4:00 pm – 9:30 pm Central Time
Saturday, September 18, 2021  9:00 am – 1:00 pm Central Time

CLASS READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

August 27, 2021  DUE: Donald Macleod, *Covenant Theology* (all)
DUE: Macleod, *Covenant: 2 & Federal Theology-An Oppressive Legalism?* (all)
DUE: Belcher, *The Fulfillment of the Promises of God*, pp. 139-164
AVAILABLE: Online lectures – Lesson 1 (not required)

ASSIGNMENT DUE: Quiz 1 (due by 11:59 pm Central Time)

DUE: WCF 7; LC Questions 20-22, 30-36; and SC Questions 12, 16, & 20.
AVAILABLE: Online lectures – Lesson 2 (not required)
ASSIGNMENT DUE: Quiz 2 (due by 11:59 pm Central Time)

ASSIGNMENT DUE: Quiz 3 (due by 11:59 pm Central Time)

AVAILABLE: Online lectures – Lesson 3 (not required)
ASSIGNMENT DUE: Quiz 4 (due by 11:59 pm Central Time)
ASSIGNMENT DUE: Précis on *Covenant of Works*. (due by 11:59 pm CT)

DUE: O. Palmer Robertson, *Christ of the Covenants*, pp. 147-166.
AVAILABLE: Online lectures – Lesson 4 (not required)
ASSIGNMENT DUE: Quiz 5 (due by 11:59 pm Central Time)
AVAILABLE: Online lectures – Lesson 5 (not required)
ASSIGNMENT DUE: Quiz 6 (due by 11:59 pm Central Time)

AVAILABLE: Online lectures – Lessons 6-7 (not required)
ASSIGNMENT DUE: Quiz 7 (due by 11:59 pm Central Time)
ASSIGNMENT DUE: Précis on *Covenant of Grace* (due by 11:59 pm CT)

DUE: Guy P. Waters, Reid & Muether, *Covenant Theology*, pp. 551-569.
AVAILABLE: Online lectures – Lessons 8-9 (not required)
ASSIGNMENT DUE: Quiz 8 (due by 11:59 pm Central Time)
ASSIGNMENT DUE: Précis on *Covenant of Redemption* (due 11:59 pm CT)

Oct. 29  DUE: Donald Macleod, *The Lord's Supper as a Means of Grace* (all),
*Qualifications for Communion* (all), and *The Real Presence* (all).
ASSIGNMENT DUE: Quiz 9 (due by 11:59 pm Central Time)
ASSIGNMENT DUE: Précis on *Covenant Theology* (due by 11:59 pm CT)
(Definition, Description, Distinctives, and History).

Nov. 5  DUE: Vos, *Biblical Theology*, pp. 3-182.


Nov. 19  ASSIGNMENT DUE: **Course Binder/Notebook**(due by 11:59 pm CT)

Dec. 10  ASSIGNMENT DUE: **Final Exam Due**
**Précis Assignments**

A précis is a precise summary or abstract of a particular subject matter or topic. Each student must complete four, one-page précis' of 4 assigned topics: Covenant Theology (Definition, Description, Distinctives, and History); Covenant of Redemption; Covenant of Works; Covenant of Grace. These will aid you in understanding more about the doctrine as well as provide you with teaching material for the future. Please contact the TA if you have any questions, uncertainties, or difficulties. These must be submitted in pdf format on Canvas. **Each précis must be exactly one page with the bibliography on the second page.** The format will be 11 pt., Times New Roman, ½" margins, single spaced. You must use MLA parenthetical citations such as [“by means of the covenant” (Marcel 127).] Following is an example of how your paper should be titled:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Précis on the Covenant of Works</th>
<th>9/24/21</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Begin by outlining the doctrine. For example, you may break the Covenant of Works down to Contracting Parties, Abiding Significance, Sacraments, Blessings & Curses, Ordinances, Christ’s Fulfillment, and Stipulations. Then fill it in with Scripture references and supporting quotations/summaries from your research maintaining the outline format. Following are two examples of précis’: one is sparse, the other is full. One is in proper format, the other is not.

**Some Suggested Resources:**
Heinrich Heppe, *Reformed Dogmatics,* 281-319, 371-409
Note: It is also helpful to review the *Belgic Confession* and *Heidelberg Catechism.*
# Course Objectives Related to MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Mini-Justification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>The student will have a firm grasp of the fundamentals of Covenant theology as it spans and integrates the Scripture; the student will articulate his knowledge on the cumulative, comprehensive final exam as well as on four précis assignments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articulation (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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scripture</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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reformed Theology</td>
<td>Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanctification</td>
<td>Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student’s sanctification.</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desire for Worldview</td>
<td>Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winsomely Reformed</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>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastoral Ministry</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>Moderate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Course:** 05ST5300 Covenant Theology  
**Professor:** Rev. Dr. J. Ligon Duncan, III  
**Campus:** Houston, TX  
**Date:** Fall 2021