

Theology & Soul Care
Spring 2022
Thursday 6:00 – 8:00pm

Nathanael J. Brooks, PhD
704.900.1259
nbrooks@rts.edu
@natejbrooks
Office hours by appointment.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The purpose of this course is to explore the connection between theology and counseling. Primary theological topics (the doctrine of creation, anthropology, hamartiology, Christology, pneumatology, eschatology, etc.) will be studied in their application to pastoral soul care and counseling situations.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The course objectives for this class are twofold:

- 1) Students will recognize the vital importance of theology for counseling
- 2) Students will recognize the incompleteness of theology without its application.

COURSE MATERIALS

There are two categories of reading for this course. The first category consists of two books that all students must read. The second category consists of a list of books from which you will pick the remainder of your reading. All of the books selected below demonstrate a model of theological thinking that we're wanting to develop as they do excellent work in theology and then move to apply the doctrine under consideration to some aspect of the Christian life. I'd encourage you to read what you're most interested in from the Selective Reading list.

REQUIRED FOR ALL STUDENTS:

Systematics & Counseling

Adams, Jay. *A Theology of Christian Counseling: More Than Redemption*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, reprinted 1986. (308pp.)

Adams' work is the first treatment of systematic theology by a biblical counselor and remains the most detailed to date. Adams begins by stating, "More Than Redemption is a first attempt to consider a biblical theology of counseling. As such it is woefully imbalanced and incomplete. No one knows this better than I." This book is uneven in its treatment of doctrine. However, this book is a valuable read because it models how doctrine is applied into the life of the Christian as relates to particular problems. You may not agree with every move Adams makes (I don't), but watch and learn from his process.

Anthropology

Pearcey, Nancy. *Love Thy Body: Answering Hard Questions about Life and Sexuality*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2018. (264pp.)

Pearcey's book connects the doctrine of creation with human sexuality. I've assigned this book because Pearcey does a masterful job of connecting creation with the dignity of created matter, namely our bodies. She then takes the nobility of the human body and uses that theological concept to address homosexuality, abortion, transgenderism, hookup culture, euthanasia, etc. We will be discussing this book in class, so if you are only able to read one book before our week together, read this one (but you really should try to do all the reading beforehand).

Sanctification

Powlison, David. *How Does Sanctification Work?* Wheaton: Crossway, 2017. (128pp.)

***How Does Sanctification Work?* details the biblical processes by which sanctification happens. Powlison insists that ministry and theology are two sides of the same coin, where individual moments of ministry are consistently unbalanced and theology is consistently balancing. No one doctrine is a panacea for human problems, requiring a robust understanding of theology and a dexterity in applying different doctrines to different situations and individuals.**

*If you have read the Powlison book for another course, read one additional selection below.

SELECTIVE READING:

Fine Print:

You must read at least 300 pages from the below list.

You must read the entirety of the works you select.

You must read at least 2 works.

If you have already read one or more of the below books, choose different books off the list.

Ecclesiology

Leeman, Jonathan. *The Rule of Love: How the local Church Should Reflect God's Love and Authority*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2018, 176pp.

Leeman's book is a study on how theology proper connects to life within the body of Christ. He details how God's love both draws us in and repels us, delights and offends us. As you read, connect what Leeman is saying regarding love and authority to the practice of counseling. (Please note that this book will be helpful for students from all ecclesiological persuasions. Though it is written by a Baptist, it is not beholden to the author's polity.)

Trinity

Sanders, Fred. *The Deep Things of God: How the Trinity Changes Everything*, 2nd ed. Wheaton: Crossway, 2017, 247pp. NOTE: Make sure to get the 2nd edition.

Sanders writes of how the Trinity is the fountainhead of all Christian doctrine and practice. This isn't so much a book about proofs of the Trinity from the Scriptures or the 'economic' and 'immanent' Trinity as it is a book

about how the Trinity is interwoven with every facet of the Christian's spiritual life. Counselees often struggle because they have a shallow understanding of who God himself is. Sanders connects the Trinity with the gospel, salvation, assurance, reading Scripture, and prayer.

Soteriology

Ferguson, Sinclair. *The Whole Christ*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2016, 229pp.

The Whole Christ is a powerful book on the importance of the doctrine of Christ. I chose this book because its teaching on the interrelationship between union with Christ and assurance, to the exclusion of antinomianism and legalism, is a consistent theme in counseling. People in front of you often struggle with assurance because of their entangling sins. We want to help them see the whole Christ – not just a Christ of law or a Christ of license.

Turretin, Francis. *Justification*. Edited by James T. Dennison, Jr. Translated by George Musgrave Geiger. Phillipsburg: P&R, 1994, 111pp.

This book ain't the theological kiddie pool. Turretin is a challenging read, but his exacting writing on the nature and extent of justification drives to the core of helping individuals. His material directly repels false guilt, feelings of worthlessness, and shame and while showing that justification and adoption are necessarily connected doctrines. Pay attention to how justification provides the standing for all hope in counseling. If this is your first seminary class, maybe don't pick this one.

Doctrine of Scripture

Weeks, Noel. *The Sufficiency of Scripture*. Carlisle: Banner of Truth, 1988, 100pp.

Weeks articulates how the doctrine of the sufficiency of Scripture necessarily implies that God would not leave words unspoken that are necessary for the transformation of his people. Given the nature of human fallenness, nothing that is derived from fallenness will be able to transform our hearts. Scripture is our connection point with absolute truth, making the Spirit's work through Scripture central to genuine human transformation. Weeks' work is incisive and accessible. It's seventy bucks on Amazon for some reason, but you can buy it at www.banneroftruth.org for eighteen unless you want to donate a bunch of money to Jeff Bezos. Weeks' applications in Part 2 are a bit dated or off point for this course, so your reading will focus on Part 1, which is particularly relevant.

Eschatology

Gladd, Benjamin L. and Matthew S. Harmon. *Making All Things New: Inaugurated Eschatology for the Life of the Church*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2016, 177pp.

Gladd and Harmon do a great job of showing how central eschatology is to Christian life and doctrine. Christians are already spiritually resurrected, which creates conflict between them and the decaying world around them. This book is very helpful for counseling as it highlights the new nature

within human beings and how our struggles are oftentimes a product of being stuck within the already/not yet. This book shades towards being a thematic biblical theology rather than systematic theology, so if you're inclined that way, this would be a good pick for you.

Pneumatology

Winslow, Octavius. *The Work of the Holy Spirit*. London: John Farquhar Shaw, 1857; reprint, Carlisle: Banner of Truth, repr. 1961, 223pp.

An oldie, but a goodie. Winslow's work connects the work of the Holy Spirit to the overall work of God in a believer's life. The interconnectedness of the work of the Trinity is distinctly discussed, which grounds the work of the Holy Spirit as an application of the work of Christ. If you're in an environment where you minister to individuals from a charismatic or Pentecostal background, this work would be particularly helpful.

COURSE WORK

(1) Written Work

Students will complete two separate 6 - page theological analysis papers in connection with the books they have selected to read. You must have read the entirety of the book before completing your theological analysis paper. These theological analysis papers will consist of applying the doctrinal points covered in the books to a particular counseling situation. Particular details on this project will be explained on Canvas.

Three counseling cases are provided on Canvas under "Files" in the file named "Case Studies for Theo Analysis." Students will pick which case study to apply to which book.

The purpose of this assignment is twofold. First, students are encouraged to think through counseling issues theologically. This answers the question "How does theology serve to provide structure and content to address human problems?" Second, students are encouraged to think through theology as being applicational by necessity. This answers the question "What's the point of theology?"

(2) Pastoral Interview

Students are to interview a pastor within their local church regarding the doctrinal themes he consistently employs in counseling/shepherding. If you are a pastor, interview another interview another pastor from your church or presbytery, convention, association, network, etc. More details regarding this assignment are available on Canvas under "Files." You will write a 2-page summary report of this interview.

(3) Reading Reports

Students are to fill out the reading reports at the proper time on Canvas.

(4) Final Exam

Students will take a final exam. This final is open bible, open note, and open book. The only thing you cannot do is talk to others about it. The final will be a case study where you are expected to weave together multiple theological categories to provide holistic care in a complex situation. Your theological analysis papers will prepare you for this exam. Instructions are appended below on how to use Lockdown Browser.

COURSE GRADING

Theological Reflection Papers (2)	30%
Reading Report	25%
Final Exam	30%
Pastoral Interview	15%

NUTS AND BOLTS

Classroom Policies

1. Please follow all RTS classroom policies, including policies for internet use (appended below).
2. Papers should be formatted according to SBL or Chicago/Turabian standards.
3. Students are required to cite all sources consulted for a written assignment. Students who plagiarize or cheat in any other manner are guilty of academic misconduct and will be reported to the Dean of Students. This will result in disciplinary action up to and including failure of the course and academic dismissal.
4. Laptops are welcome in class for note taking only. Only word processing programs may be open during class; no browsers, email programs, social media feeds, or any other program is to be used. Please silence cell phones and do not text, Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram, or whatever else desperately beckons for your attention during class.
5. The professor reserves the right to modify any student's grade who is absent for a significant portion of the class.

Assignment Schedule

Reading Group 1 - Adams Book - Pearcey Book	February 24
Theological Analysis Paper 1 Selective Reading #1	March 10
Pastoral Interview Powlison Book	March 24
Theological Analysis Paper 2 Selective Reading #2	April 28
Final Exam	May 12-17

RTS Charlotte

Student Instructions for Exams (LockDown Browser)

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>

- This link is ONLY for RTS students and covers Mac and Windows applications.
- Be sure that you are able to login to your Canvas account from the LockDown Browser before scheduling a time to take your exam.
- 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.)

If you use internet filtering software (for example, Covenant Eyes) you should disable it before beginning an exam with LockDown Browser. Some types of filtering software can block your computer's connection to Canvas. Also, please be sure to add an exception for our Canvas URL: <https://rts.instructure.com>

2. 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.

3. 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.
4. Access the exam during the date window specified for that midterm:
 1. 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.
 2. Have your student ID number available to input into the exam.
 3. If you use internet filtering software, you should disable it before beginning an exam with LockDown Browser.
 4. 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>.
 5. 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).
 6. Time clock will begin once you open the exam.
 7. Exam must be completed in one sitting. You may not exit and return to exam later.
 8. 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.
5. The proctor must confirm completion at the end of the exam by emailing proctor.charlotte@rts.edu, including the *Course Name & Student Name* in the email subject line. There is a question in the exam which will prompt you to ask your proctor to send this email.
6. Proctors may be contacted to verify information regarding exam administration.
7. 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.

Please also adhere to the following RTS internet usage protocol:

RTS Charlotte Classroom Technology Usage

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.

Course Objectives Related to MACC Student Learning Outcomes

Course: Theology & Soul Care
 Professor: Nate Brooks
 Campus: Charlotte
 Date: Summer 2021

<u>MACC Student Learning Outcomes</u> <i>In order to measure the success of the MACC 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 MAC outcomes.</i>	<u>Rubric</u> > Strong > Moderate > Minimal > None	<u>Mini-Justification</u>
<u>COUNSELING KNOWLEDGE</u> Demonstrate knowledge of counseling theories and modern anthropology.	Strong	Course is designed to develop a strong theological basis for counseling and care.
<u>COUNSELING SKILL</u> Ability to apply biblical truths and common-grace insights in a variety of counseling settings.	Strong	Students are instructed to bring particular biblical truths and theological categories to bear on particular counseling problems.
<u>SCRIPTURE</u> Significant knowledge of the original meaning of Scripture and ability to apply to modern counseling circumstances.	Moderate	This course will more specifically apply systematic theology to counseling situations; however, Scripture is inseparable from systematic theology.
<u>REFORMED THEOLOGY</u> Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice and ability to apply to modern counseling circumstances.	Strong	The core of this course is the application of Reformed theology to one's counseling framework and specific counseling issues.
<u>SANCTIFICATION</u> Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Moderate	Seeing how God's word addresses some of the most challenging human problems with wisdom and skill naturally grows love for God.
<u>WINSOMELY REFORMED</u> Embraces a winsomely Reformed ethos.	Strong	Course addresses Reformed theology in depth and demonstrates its relevance for counseling and shepherding.