

Systematic Theology III

ST603

Fall, 2009

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Thursdays, 1:00 p.m-4:00 p.m.

Bowie Divinity Hall

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Office hours: Mondays and Tuesdays, 2:30-5:30 pm. I will make every reasonable effort to be in my office during these hours. However, due to meetings and unforeseen circumstances that may arise, my schedule may change. If you need to see me, please contact me by email or telephone to schedule an appointment.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course concludes a systematic presentation of the Christian faith. Using Biblical constructs, historical developments, and confessional statements, students explore the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit and Salvation, the Doctrine of the Church and Sacraments, and the Doctrine of Last Things.

COURSE PURPOSE:

The purpose of this course is to gain an understanding of the basic teachings of the Christian Church and essential concepts of Christian theology. In accord with the seminary's mission statement, one of the goals set for students in this course is that they will be prepared to utilize the Church's historical and theological heritage as an important resource in their personal spiritual development and ministry.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

It is the teacher's intention that by the end of the term, students will be able to:

1. **Define** key terms and concepts necessary for understanding standard theological literature and engaging in faithfully informed theological conversation.
2. **Understand** how such terms and concepts relate to Holy Scripture and how they emerged and have developed in the life of the Church.
3. **Grasp** something of the interconnectedness and beauty of the various doctrines of the Church.

4. **Evaluate** at least some of the Church's major theological claims in light of the criticisms of voices both within and without the Church and in light of the demands of pastoral ministry in the 21st century.
5. **Experience** something of the joy and rigor of theological inquiry.

COURSE METHOD:

The purpose and objectives of this course will be achieved through three learning components. The first is the **Content Component**, the student's familiarity with the vocabulary, themes and concepts of Systematic Theology. This will be accomplished through readings, independent research, class lectures and discussion. Students will demonstrate their familiarity with this material by completing the course requirements as stated below.

The second component is **Classroom Participation**. A vital exchange of ideas is essential to the process of exploration, and all students are to be prepared for class discussions by completing the assigned readings prior to class. To ensure and gauge such participation, 5 or 6 pop-quizzes will be given throughout the course of the semester.

The third is the **Reflective Component**. With the first two volumes of Donald Bloesch's *Christian Foundations* series and John Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion* as its primary texts, this course invites students to engage in a vigorous, wide-ranging discussion informed by both ancient and modern concerns. An effort will be made in class to relate readings in Bloesch and Calvin, but close, detailed readings in Bloesch will be expected on a week-to-week basis and will be the primary focus of each quiz. However, each student will also be expected to have read Book III & IV of Calvin's *Institutes* by the end of the semester and will write a paper that demonstrates a sincere and thoughtful effort to integrate insights from the assigned readings in Bloesch and Calvin. Each student will also complete a final examination (Dec.10).

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS:

Students are expected to secure their own copies of all required textbooks. As a convenience, the seminary has a bookstore portal of the website at <http://www.erskineseminary.org/bookstore.html> There you will find links to familiar vendors and can check availability of texts, compare prices, and place orders. The Erskine Campus Bookstore will carry a limited number of copies of every required text and orders for books can be placed through the Campus Bookstore.

Bloesch, Donald G. *The Holy Spirit: Works & Gifts*. Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP, 2000. ISBN 0-8308-1415-9

Bloesch, Donald G. *The Church: Sacraments, Worship, Ministry, Mission*. Downers

Grove, Illinois: IVP, 2002. ISBN 0-8308-1416-7

Bloesch, Donald G. *The Last Things: Resurrection, Judgment, Glory*. Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP, 2004. ISBN 0-8308-1417-5

Calvin, John. *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, I-II. Ed. John T. McNeill. Trans. Ford Lewis Battles. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960. ISBN 0-664-21882-2

RECOMMENDED TEXTBOOKS:

Elwell, Walter A. *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, 2nd edition. Grand Rapids: Baker. 2001. ISBN 1-84227-082-8

Ferguson, Sinclair and Wright, David F. *New Dictionary of Theology*. Downers Grove, Illinois. InterVarsity. 1988. ISBN 0-8308-1400-0

Harvey, Van. A. *A Handbook of Theological Terms*. New York: Macmillan. 1964. ISBN 0-02-085430-7

Richardson, Alan and Bowden, John. *The Westminster Dictionary of Christian Theology*. Philadelphia: Westminster. 1983. ISBN 0-664-22748-1

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Requirement One (25% of total grade): Each student will write a 12-point type, 10 page, double spaced paper, following the standards in Turabian 7th edition, on a common topic discussed by both Bloesch and Calvin in the assigned readings. The paper topic must be approved by the professor and will consist of a clearly stated thesis, antithesis, and synthesis: 1) a *comparison* of Bloesch and Calvin on a specific point or theme, i.e., a discussion of how and why they appear to agree or disagree about a specific point or theme (thesis); 2) a well-crafted, well-researched, well-documented *objection to or qualification* of their individual teachings on this particular point or theme (antithesis); 3) and a *critical theological evaluation* of the objection to or qualification of their teachings on this particular point or theme (synthesis).). For further assistance in writing this paper, please see essay on “Writing Theological Papers” on Professor Fairbairn’s website: http://www.erskineseminary.org/Academics_Files/Faculty/Fairbairn.html
This paper will be due on Dec.3.

Requirement Two (25% of total grade): Each student will complete a final exam that will cover material from reading assignments, lectures and classroom discussion. The final exam will be on Dec.10.

Requirement Three (50% of total grade): Each student will be expected to have read and be able to discuss the reading assignments each week. To ensure and gauge such participation, 5 or 6 “pop-quizzes” will be given throughout the semester. These quizzes will consist of 10 basic questions (and one extra credit question) on the required reading

material assigned for that day. The questions will be basic, content-oriented questions that most any attentive reader should be able to answer.

OVERALL GRADING SCALE:

See Seminary Catalogue, p.30.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS:

Evaluation of your work in this course will be based on *completion* of all assignments and participation in class sessions. The distribution of weight for grades is:

Requirement One (Paper)	25%
Requirement Two (Final examination)	25%
Requirement Three (Classroom Participation & Quizzes)	<u>50%</u>
	100%

The criteria for evaluation are grasp of material covered, sensitivity to the theological issues involved, originality and creativity in doing the assignments, correct use of written English, and overall contribution to the class.

The course depends heavily on class participation, so students are expected to be present for each class meeting in its entirety. Seminary policy allows students to miss one class (3 hours) without penalty. Students who miss more than three hours will be subject to grade reduction in the course.

Written work is due at class time on the date scheduled in the syllabus unless re-negotiated in class. Written work turned in late is subject to grade reduction. Written work turned in excessively late is subject to refusal.

SEMINARY POLICIES:

Drop/Add/Withdrawal: Once a student has completed, signed, and submitted his/her registration to the Registrar for this class, it is a binding contract, and billing will be based on this registration. If the student decides not to take this class, he/she must complete a “drop/add” form and secure the appropriate signatures prior to the drop/add deadline during the second week of the semester or term. If one wishes to withdraw from the course after the drop/add deadline, one must complete a withdrawal form, and tuition will be refunded on a pro rated basis. Failure to withdraw from the class properly will result in the student’s receiving a grade of “F” for the course, and full tuition charges will apply. No exceptions will be made to this policy.

Office Hours

My normal office hours are printed in this syllabus. However, due to meetings and unforeseen circumstances that may arise, my schedule may change. If you need to see me, I strongly recommend that you call or e-mail to schedule an appointment.

Language about God and Humanity

Although God transcends the distinction between male and female, the Bible and the Church's historic creeds and confessions use masculine language in reference to God. Thus, the Seminary encourages all students to retain this masculine usage when speaking and writing about God. Furthermore, the Seminary recognizes that all human beings, male and female, are created equally in the image of God (Gen. 1:26-27), and believers of both sexes are fellow heirs of the grace of life (1 Pet. 3:7). Accordingly, whenever students are speaking and writing about males and females, they should use language that clearly includes both men and women (for example, by saying/writing "humanity" rather than "man" or "people" rather than "men").

Conduct in Theological Discussions

Erskine Seminary is committed to the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church, and it expects its students to show respect for all who identify with that one Church. In all written work, oral presentations, and discussions both inside and outside the classroom, the Seminary expects students to conduct discussions of controversial issues in a context of respect for those with whom one disagrees. Please see the Community Life Statement in the Catalog for more information.

Incompletes

The grade of "I" or incomplete is given at the discretion of the professor. A grade of "I" is normally given when a student has substantially completed the requirements for a course but has been prevented by extraordinary circumstances from completing the remainder of the course requirements. A student who wishes to request an incomplete should normally complete an incomplete form prior to the end of the semester and ask the professor to grant the request. (Under unusual circumstances, the student may communicate with the professor by phone or email rather than in person, and the professor may then agree to fill out the form at the student's request. Under exceptional circumstances, the professor may initiate the process by filling out the form on the student's behalf.) If the professor grants the request, he/she will sign the incomplete form and turn it in with his/her final grade report. An "I" in any course must be removed by March 1 for the Fall Term, April 1 for the January Term, August 1 for the Spring Term, and November 1 for the Summer Term. Only the Dean may grant extensions of incompletes beyond the established completion date. Otherwise, these grades automatically become "F."

Style and Bibliographical Formatting Requirements - All papers must be typed/processed (twelve-point font, double-spaced, one-inch margins) and fully documented, following the standards in Turabian, 7th ed. In this course, footnotes and a bibliography are required in each paper. The paper's cover page and bibliography are not counted towards page requirements.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

Sept. 3 Introduction

Donald Bloesch, *The Holy Spirit*, 11-47

Calvin, *Institutes* III.1, 537-542 (See also I.8.14-15, 138-141)

Recommended Reading:

Michael Green, *I Believe in The Holy Spirit* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1975), 11-57

Sept. 10 The Holy Spirit in Modern and Ancient Discussion

Donald Bloesch, *The Holy Spirit*, 48-97

Recommended Reading:

Michael Green, *I Believe in The Holy Spirit* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1975), 58-99

Donald Bloesch, *Spirituality Old & New: Recovering Authentic Spiritual Life* (Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP, 2007)

Sept. 17 The Holy Spirit in the Reformation and Post-Reformation Period

Donald Bloesch. *The Holy Spirit*, 98-178

Recommended Reading:

Michael Green, *I Believe in The Holy Spirit* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1975), 100-147

George S. Hendry, *The Holy Spirit in Christian Theology*. Revised and enlarged. (London: SCM Press, 1965)

Sept. 24 Pentecostalism and the Person and Work of the Holy Spirit

Donald Bloesch. *The Holy Spirit*, 179-221; 268-335

Recommended Reading:

Michael Green, *I Believe in The Holy Spirit* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1975), 148-218

Frederick Dale Bruner, "A Repository of the Modern Theological Sources of the Pentecostal Doctrine and Experience of the Holy Spirit" in Frederick Dale Bruner, *A Theology of the Holy Spirit: The Pentecostal Experience and the New Testament Witness* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1970), 323-341

Oct. 1 God's Mission in the World and the Church's Purpose and Identity

Donald Bloesch, *The Church*, 17-68

Calvin, *Institutes* IV.1-2, 1011-1053

Packer, J.I. "A Stunted Ecclesiology? The Theory & Practice of Evangelical Churchliness" in *Touchstone*, Dec., 2002, Vol.15, Issue 10. <http://www.touchstonemag.com/docs/issues/15.10docs/15-10pg37.html>

Recommended Reading:

Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics* IV/3:2:762-795, §72.2 "The Community for the World."

Donald K. McKim, "Ecclesiological Controversy: What Is the Church?" in *Theological Turning Points: Major Issues In Christian Thought* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1988), 44-59

Oct. 8 The Kingdom of God and The Marks of the Church

Donald Bloesch, *The Church*, 69-115

M. Eugene Osterhaven, *The Spirit of the Reformed Tradition* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1971), 45-55

*Be sure to have read by now John Calvin, *Institutes* IV.1.19 and with particular attention this week on IV.1.12-19.

Oct. 15 Divine Worship & The Holy Sacraments

Donald Bloesch, *The Church*, 116-188

Calvin, *Institutes* IV.14, 1276-1359

Recommended Reading:

Wilhelm Niesel, “The Sacraments” in *The Theology of Calvin* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1956), 211-228

Hughes Oliphant Old, *Worship That Is According to Scripture* (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1984), 1-177

M. Eugene Osterhaven, *The Spirit of the Reformed Tradition* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1971), 55-59

Ronald S. Wallace, *Calvin’s Doctrine of the Word and Sacrament* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1957), 133-174

Oct. 22 God’s Ministry and the Church’s Order

Donald Bloesch, *The Church*, 189-234

Calvin, *Institutes* IV.3-5, 1053-1102

Recommended Reading:

Wilhelm Niesel, “The Church” in *The Theology of Calvin* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1956), 182-210

M. Eugene Osterhaven, *The Spirit of the Reformed Tradition* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1971), 59-67

Oct. 29 Classic and Contemporary Challenges to the Church’s Witness

Donald Bloesch, *The Church*, 235-287

Calvin, *Institutes* IV.8-10, 1149-1210

Recommended Reading:

Hauerwas, Stanley and Willimon, William. *Resident Aliens: Life in the Christian Colony – A Provocative Christian Assessment of Culture and Ministry for People Who Know That Something is Wrong*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1991. ISBN: 0-687-36159

- Nov. 5** **“And He Shall Come Again”**
- Donald Bloesch, *The Last Things*, 17-61
- Recommended Reading:
- Stephen Travis, *I Believe in the Second Coming of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1982), 11-250
- Nov. 12** **“To Judge the Quick and the Dead”**
- Donald Bloesch, *The Last Things*, 62-113
- C.S. Lewis, “The World’s Last Night” in *The World’s Last Night And Other Essays* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1973), 93-113
- Nov. 19** **“The Resurrection of the Dead” and “The Communion of the Saints”**
- Donald Bloesch, *The Last Things*, 114-173
- C.S. Lewis, “The Weight of Glory” in *The Weight of Glory* (New York: Macmillan, 1980)
- Nov. 26** **Thanksgiving Break!**
- Dec. 3** **“The Life Everlasting”**
- Donald Bloesch, *The Last Things*, 174-260
- Recommended Reading:
- Donald K. McKim, “Eschatological Controversy: What Is the Kingdom” in *Theological Turning Points: Major Issues In Christian Thought* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1988), 151-165
- C.S. Lewis, *The Great Divorce* (New York: Macmillan, 1946)
- Dec. 10** **Final examination**

THOUGH NO MAJOR ALTERATIONS IN THIS SYLLABUS ARE ANTICIPATED, THIS SYLLABUS IS TO BE CONSIDERD TENTATIVE UNTIL THE FIRST DAY OF CLASS.

