



OT711CO From Creation to Consummation Spring 2012

Columbia: Saturdays 9:00 - 5:00 P.M., 2/11, 3/3, 3/31, 4/28

Professor: Terry L. Eves, Ph.D.
 Office: Bowie Divinity Hall B1
 Telephone: (Work) (864) 379-8864
 Telephone: (Home) (864) 379-3395
 Fax: (864) 379-3171
 Email: eves@erskine.edu
www.erskine.edu/seminary

Office Hours for Spring TBD

My normal office hours are TBD. However, due to meetings and unforeseen circumstances that may arise, my published schedule may change. If you need to see me, I strongly recommend that you call or e-mail to schedule an appointment. Other times by appointment only. Breakfast or lunch discussions are also encouraged. ☺

Course Description

OT711CO: From Creation to Consummation

This course introduces students to the foundational role of Biblical Theology, namely the Creation-Fall-Redemption-Consummation structure of the Bible. Central concerns will be: the progress of God's redemptive plan for his people; intertextuality; attention to both the unity and diversity of the Bible's message within its coherent canonical and covenantal structure; and how Christian ministers and teachers can faithfully appropriate and apply Old Testament texts and theology to New Testament and New Covenant redemptive realities.

No prerequisites to take as an elective. In order to receive exegesis credit for this course, students must have successfully completed BI 502 Principles of Exegesis and BI 503 Introduction to the Biblical Languages (or Hebrew I & II) prior to taking this class.

Exegesis/Elective. Three hours.

The Systematic Theology people have given permission for this new class to be given the same status as OT710 Old Testament Theology and NT710 New Testament Theology.

Course Purpose

The mission of Erskine Theological Seminary is to educate persons for service in the Christian church. As part of that mission, training in Biblical Theology which leads to a deeper understanding of the coherent Biblical message of Creation Fall, Redemption and Consummation is a powerful resource for Gospel teaching and ministry. Commitment to the centrality of the Bible for ministry will be strengthened by this course.

Course Objectives

- To seek to uncover and comprehend more clearly the overall structure of the Bible itself. We want to faithfully and beneficially answer the crucial question, “Where is the Bible going from Genesis to Revelation”? We want to better understand the architectonics¹ of the Bible, that is, the existing theological structure and substructure of the Bible's overarching plot(s). We want to better understand how each part of that revelation contributes to, relates to, and functions within the greater and coherent canonical whole, and how the greater whole contributes to and contextualizes each individual part, in order to begin to think about the Bible more accurately and holistically. This includes gaining an appreciation for the value and theological contribution of each book in the Bible, ultimately of each verse in the Bible. The goal is to enable us to more accurately understand the historical unfolding of God's revelation in its inner-Biblical relatedness, throughout the whole Bible and the hermeneutical and theological significance of that interconnecting. Redemptive history and Biblical theology attempt to discover the theological architectonics¹ of the Bible that form its coherence, complexity, theological themes, trajectories, unity and diversity. This involves understanding the progression of God's plan for his people, beginning to appreciate the redemptive-historical significance of each stage of redemptive history by carefully and competently reading the whole Bible from left-to-right (and then return and read it from left to right again ☺) in light of God's intended purposes. It is important, in fact crucial, to be able to place any Biblical text within its redemptive-historical moment of the canon as a whole, including its connection to God's final revelation in the person and work of Jesus Christ. This means reading the Bible in such a way that we genuinely seek (like the Reformers) and competently seek to faithfully understand “The Whole Bible” (*tota Scriptura*) and to better appreciate the Bible in the divinely planned and gifted shape that it has come to us.

¹ “Architectonics” is a technical term used to describe the dynamic of inter-connectedness within a complex whole. I thank Dr. Byron Berger for this concept.

- To better appreciate the overall meta-narrative of Scripture and the profound insight of the Biblical categories of *Creation* (What is the nature of reality? Where do we come from, and who are we?); *Fall* (What has gone wrong with this world?); *Redemption* (What is God doing with this broken, fallen world? What is God doing to repair his rebellious creation? What does God call us to do, working alongside of him, to fix it?); and *Consummation* (What is the divinely intended future for God's creation? What are God's ultimate plans for reality? How does understanding what that future reality will be like help me in my life now? What is the relation between this creation and the age to come? Is redemption solely personal or also cosmic? Is the Bible's eschatology identical to that of many in the modern church, i.e., is the final future of humanity to be found in heaven or on a purified and exalted earth and cosmos?).
- To better appreciate the *profound interconnectedness* of Creation and Redemption, as inseparably connected and mutually illuminating. We seek to better understand that the nature and plan of God is revealed in both creation (which itself is utterly gracious) and redemption (which is re-creation, restoration and one day glorification). The original creation helps us to understand both who God is, as well as who we are, what he intends for his creation and what our roles in that creation are. We wish to better understand that the commitments of God in redemption are the *same* commitments he displayed in creation, and that the extent of redemption and the covenant of grace is the whole of God's creation, nothing less than the cosmos itself. As Abraham Kuyper once said, "There is not a single square inch of the universe of which Christ, who is Lord of all, does not say "It is mine!"
- To better understand both the *diversity* of God's revelation and the *unity* of his plan, to seek to do increasing justice to both the complexity and the coherence of the Bible. All of God's revelation tells a *unified but complicated* and nuanced story of creation, fall, redemption and consummation which expresses the one will and one purpose of the one God.
- To introduce students to the discipline, contents, methodology of Biblical Theology, its unique role, and to begin to think through its contributions to and its interconnectedness with exegetical theology, systematic theology, practical theology and preaching, teaching counseling, etc. This will also involve us in better understanding how to preach the Gospel faithfully from any portion of Scripture with sensitivity to its Biblical Theological role and its moment in Redemptive History. See the last part of the course description in this regard which reads "...and how Christian ministers and teachers can faithfully appropriate and apply Old Testament texts and theology to New Testament and New Covenant redemptive realities." ☺

- To emphasize that careful, competent and faithful exegesis is the necessary basis for reliable Biblical-theological conclusions and have much to offer in mutual conversation with systematic theology (and vice-versa!).
- To give careful attention to selected major concepts of the Bible as well as gain the appropriate working technical vocabulary, such as, covenant, the Kingdom of God, promise and fulfillment, creation/new creation, Law and Gospel, exodus/second exodus, old covenant/new covenant, the New Testament teaching of "the Two Ages"; the Already and the Not-Yet, Inaugurated but Not Consummated Eschatology, Redemption Accomplished and Applied; and have students gain the ability to intelligently discuss selected Biblical teachings and increasingly see their profound ministerial value in every dimension of the Gospel ministry.
- To better understand what has been (and continues to be) both the most vexing and the most crucial question in reading the Bible, namely, "What is the relationship between the two Testaments?" This includes an increased understanding that earlier OT texts are the key to understanding later OT texts, that the Old Testament is the key to understanding the New Testament, that the OT is incomplete apart from the NT, and therefore that the Bible must be read from left-to-right and then from left-to-right again². Old Testament theology interconnects with and profoundly enriches our understanding of Christ, his Gospel and the New Covenant.
- To give attention to current issues of discussion by Biblical theologians regarding the vitality and future directions of Biblical Theology.
- To appreciate that the theme of the Bible is a message of victory! The goal of redemption is the complete triumph of the Triune God over the Devil, the Fall, sin and its consequences and the glorious perfection of his people on the renewed and glorified earth forever and ever!
- The *personal* dimension. As Calvin wisely and profoundly teaches us in the beginning of his *Institutes*, true knowledge of God and true knowledge of ourselves are inseparably connected. Since this is so, coming to better understand who God is as Creator, Sustainer, Redeemer and one day Consummator, means that we will begin to understand better who we are, who we were made to be, and what sort of things we are called to do in his world and for his Kingdom under him and with him. Also, since uniquely man and woman are made in God's image and we have our origin in God, we can only find our true destiny in God and his good will for us. Saint Augustine puts this beautifully when he writes in his first prayer in the Confessions "Lord, you have made us for yourself and therefore our

² I don't know if it is possible to over-estimate the significance of this!

hearts are restless until they find rest in you.” This means that we will frequently discuss what the ecclesial, ministerial and the personal implications are of all that we are studying together. This also means that a course that results in a deeper understanding of Scripture and the Gospel should also result in our greater love for and commitment to Father, Son and Spirit and his people, the church and increased transformation by the Spirit of our own lives.

- To give students the constant opportunity for significant input regarding questions, content and issues that they want us to think through together and sustained opportunities for discussion together.
- To aid students in continuing to develop *graduate level* Biblical and theological analysis, research skills, rhetorical skills in leading discussions, critical thinking and evaluation, reading, writing, conversational and competence in ministry skills.

The Big Picture

“The essence of the Christian religion consists in this: that the creation of the Father, devastated by sin, is restored in the death of the Son of God, and re-created by the Holy Spirit into a kingdom of God.” Herman Bavinck, from *Gereformeerde Dogmatiek*, fourth edition (Dutch), 1928, I: 89.

"[The] eschatological principle is so deeply embedded in the structure of the Biblical religion as to precede and underlie everything else." Geerhardus Vos, *Pauline Eschatology*, p. 66.

“There is not a single square inch of the universe of which Christ, who is Lord of all, does not say “It is mine!” Abraham Kuyper, *The Stone Lectures*.

Required Textbooks

Students are expected to secure their own copies of all required textbooks (below). 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 (CBD, and Amazon) and can check availability of texts, compare prices, and place orders. The ETS SBA will receive a modest percentage of the profits from students’ and professors’ purchases through this portal. 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.

Hafemann, Scott J. *The God of Promise and the Life of Faith: Understanding the Heart of the Bible*, paperback. Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2001. ISBN 1581342616.

Johnson, Dennis E. *Him We Proclaim: Preaching Christ from All the Scriptures*, paperback. Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 2007. ISBN 978-1596380547.

Lawrence, Michael. *Biblical Theology in the Life of the Church: A Guide for Ministry*, Foreword by Thomas R Schreiner, 9Marks Books, paperback. Wheaton: Crossway, 2010. ISBN: 9781433515088.

VanGemeren, Willem. *The Progress of Redemption: The Story of Salvation from Creation to the New Jerusalem*. Ada, MI: Baker Academic, 2000. ISBN: 0801020816.

Wolters, Albert M. *Creation Regained: Biblical Basics for a Reformational Worldview*, 2nd Ed. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2005. ISBN: 0802829694.

Students are encouraged to bring an English translation of the Bible with them to class. Students with skills in Hebrew and Greek are encouraged to bring a Hebrew Bible and/or Greek New Testament. ☺

Journal articles will sometimes be distributed as supplemental readings in class when they would be beneficial.

Rules of Engagement in Discussion³

You are invited and encouraged to intellectually engage one another and your professor in this class! Thoughtful and vigorous discussion is crucial to this class. Biblical theology involves thoughtful and disciplined inquiry about matters that are of fundamental importance to human existence. Such inquiry is best done in community, and there is no greater potential for productive interaction – interaction that is mutually beneficial and productive of real, valid, and worthwhile answers – than in a community of Christian scholarship. Recognizing that together we form a small community of truth-seekers devoted to Christ and his Kingdom, let us commit ourselves to work together in a spirit of mutual respect and love. The following guidelines are proposed as some ground rules, or “rules of engagement,” for our class discussions and interaction:

- Be humble, courteous, and respectful.
- Work hard to correctly understand the day’s readings and one another.
- Try to articulate your thoughts as clearly as possible.
- Avoid personal attacks.
- Keep clearly in mind that our mutual goal is Truth, not personal gain or ego.

³ These rules represent a slightly modified version of Dr. John Wingard’s rules. I’d like to thank my generous former colleague and friend for sharing them with me.

- Avoid monopolizing the conversation.
- Try to stay on topic.
- Welcome criticism and questions.
- Expect disagreement at times, and deal with it constructively when it arises.
- Be quick to apologize if you offend someone.
- Be equally quick to forgive if you are offended by someone.

Course Requirements

Because this is a Saturday, four class day course (which has a unique rhythm of its own) the grading will be as follows: one take home midterm exam (open book, open notes, open mind) 35% of the grade⁴; one take home final exam (open book, open notes, open mind) 35% of the grade⁵; one two to four page reflection paper on your reflections during the course on how Biblical Theology is a crucial and valuable resource for preaching, teaching, counseling, etc. for the Gospel minister and ways you are already thinking about beginning to use it in Gospel ministry in the present or the future 20% of the grade; and class participation 10% of the grade.

Such a format will allow us to maximally use the Saturday format effectively, using all of the class time in thinking through the books, becoming initially competent in Biblical Theology and seeking to complete the circle in additionally equipping you for competent, effective and caring Gospel ministry. ☺ Being competent in Biblical Theology has enormously changed, improved and blessed my ministry and I want to see the same thing happen to each of you! ☺

Grading Scale

100-95	A	85-84	C+	71-70	D-
94-93	A-	83-80	C	69-0	F
92-91	B+	79-78	C-		
90-88	B	77-76	D+		
87-86	B-	75-72	D		

⁴ This will be emailed to you on the evening of March 3 after I get home from Columbia.

⁵ This will be emailed to you on the evening of April 28 after I get home from Columbia.

Select Bibliography

Biblical Theology

T Desmond Alexander, ed., *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, November 2000, ISBN 0830814388.

Jeong Koo Jeon, *Covenant Theology: John Murray's and Meredith G. Kline's Response to the Historical Development of Federal Theology in Reformed Thought*, University Press of America, December 2004, ISBN 0761830626.

Dutch Biblical Theology

Danny E. Olinger and Geerhardus Vos, *A Geerhardus Vos Anthology: Biblical And Theological Insights Alphabetically Arranged*, P & R Publishing, March 2005, ISBN 0875526187.

Herman N Ridderbos, *The Authority of the New Testament Scriptures*, Baker Book House, 1963.

Herman N Ridderbos, *Coming of the Kingdom*, P & R Publishing, June 1962, ISBN 0875524087.

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Geerhardus Vos, *The Pauline Eschatology with a Forward by Richard B Gaffin, Jr.,* P & R Publishing, December 1979, ISBN 0875525059.

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Geerhardus Vos, *The Self-Disclosure of Jesus: The Modern Debate about the Messianic Consciousness*, Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1926, 1953, August 2002, ISBN 0875525040.

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Herman Bavinck, John Bolt editor, *Essays on Religion, Science and Society*, Baker Academic, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 2008, ISBN 978-801032417.

Herman Bavinck , *The Philosophy of Revelation: The Stone Lectures For 1908-1909*, Princeton Theological Seminary, University of Michigan Library April 2009.

Herman Bavinck, John Bolt editor, *Reformed Dogmatics: Volume One Prolegomena*, Baker Academic, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 2003, ISBN 0801026326.

Herman Bavinck, John Bolt editor, *Reformed Dogmatics: Volume Two God and Creation*, Baker Academic, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 2004, ISBN 0801026555.

Herman Bavinck, John Bolt editor, *Reformed Dogmatics: Volume Three Sin and Salvation in Christ*, Baker Academic, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 2006, ISBN 0801026563.

Herman Bavinck, John Bolt editor, *Reformed Dogmatics: Volume Four Holy Spirit, Church and New Creation*, Baker Academic, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 2008, ISBN 9780801026577.

Herman Bavinck, *Our Reasonable Faith, a Survey of Christian Doctrine*, Baker Books, 1978.

Herman Bavinck , *Saved by Grace: The Holy Spirit's Work in Calling and Regeneration*, Reformation Heritage Books, September 2008, ISBN 601780524.

Eric D Bristley, *Guide to the Writings of Herman Bavinck,: With an Essay by John Bolt*, Reformation Heritage Books, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 2008, ISBN 9781601780546.

Sinclair Ferguson, *The Holy Spirit*, Contours of Christian Theology, InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, Illinois, 1996, ISBN 0830815368.

John M. Frame, *The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God: A Theology of Lordship Volume One*, P & R Publishing, August 1987, ISBN 0875522629.

John M. Frame, *The Doctrine of God: A Theology of Lordship Volume Two*, P & R Publishing, June 2002, ISBN 0875522637.

John M. Frame, *The Doctrine of the Christian Life: A Theology of Lordship Volume Three*, P & R Publishing, May 2008, ISBN 0875527965.

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Gordon J Spykman, *Reformational Theology: A New Paradigm for Doing Dogmatics*, William B Eerdmans Publishing, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1992, ISBN 0802805256.

Jan Veenhof and Albert M. Wolters, *Nature and Grace in Herman Bavinck*, Dordt College Press (August 28, 2006), ISBN 0932914691.

The Relationships between Theological Disciplines⁶

Key collected volumes on the relationship between Theological Disciplines

B C Ollenburger, ed., 1991 *So Wide a Sea: Essays on Biblical and Systematic Theology*. Elkhart, IN: Institute of Mennonite Studies. 1991.

J B Green and M. Turner, eds., *Between Two Horizons. Spanning New Testament Studies and Systematic Theology*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000.

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⁶ This entire section comes from Dr. Mark Boda's bibliographic work in his syllabus <http://www.macdiv.ca/courses/documents/DoctoralSeminarBiblicalTheologyMcMasterW2009.pdf>. Many thanks for MARK's generosity for me to add it to this syllabus! Thank you Mark for your Christian generosity of spirit!

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S M Ogden, "Theology and Biblical Interpretation," *Journal of Religion* 76:172-188, 1996.

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Carol A Newsom, "Bakhtin, the Bible, and Dialogic Truth." *Journal of Religion* 76:290-306, 1996

PHEME PERKINS, "Spirit and Letter: Poking Holes in the Canon." *Journal of Religion* 76:307-327, 1996.

Rolf Rendtorff, "Recent German Old Testament Theologies." *Journal of Religion* 76:328-337, 1996.

Leo D Lefebure, "The Wisdom Tradition in Recent Christian Theology." *Journal of Religion* 76:338-348, 1996.

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M G Brett, "Biblical Studies and Theology. Negotiating the Intersections," *Biblical Interpretation* 6:131-141, 1998.

M A Sweeney, "Reconceiving the Paradigms of Old Testament Theology in the Post-Shoah Period. [inaugural lecture, School of Theology, Claremont, Ja 23 1996]," *Biblical Interpretation* 6:142-161, 1998.

D T Olson, "Biblical Theology as Provisional Monologization. A Dialogue with Childs, Brueggemann and Bakhtin," *Biblical Interpretation* 6:162-180, 1998.

Roland T Boer, "Deutero-Isaiah: Historical Materialism and Biblical Theology." *Biblical Interpretation* 6:181-204, 1998.

John Riches, "Text, Church and World: In Search of a Theological Hermeneutic." *Biblical Interpretation* 6:205-234, 1998.

Francis Watson, "A Response to John Riches." *Biblical Interpretation* 6:235-242, 1998.

W G Jeanrond, "The Significance of Revelation for Biblical Theology," *Biblical Interpretation* 6:243-257, 1998.

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G F Hasel, "The Relationship between Biblical Theology and Systematic Theology," *TrinJ* ns5:113-127, 1984.

B C Ollenburger, "Biblical Theology: Situating the Discipline," *Understanding the Word: Essays in honor of Bernhard W Anderson* (Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplements), J. T. Butler, E. W. Conrad and B. C. Ollenburger, eds., pp. 37-62, Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1985.

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Stanley E Porter, "Hermeneutics, Biblical Interpretation, and Theology: Hunch, Holy Spirit or Hard Work?" Pages 97-127 in *Beyond the Bible: Moving from Scripture to Theology*, Edited by I. Howard Mashall. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004.

Kevin J Vanhoozer, "Into the Great "Beyond": A Theological Response to the Marshall Plan." Pages 81-96 in *Beyond the Bible: Moving from Scripture to Theology*. Edited by I. Howard Marshall. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004.

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W Brueggemann, "James Barr on Old Testament Theology: A Review of *The Concept of Biblical Theology: An Old Testament Perspective*," *HBT* 22:58-74, 2000.

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J Barr, "Predictions and Surprises: A Response to Walter Brueggemann's Review," *HBT* 22:93-119, 2000

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New Testament Theology

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Graeme Goldsworthy, *Preaching the Whole Bible as Christian Scripture*, William B Eerdmans Publishing, 2000, ISBN 08028447307.

Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from Genesis: Foundations for Expository Sermons*, William B Eerdmans Publishing, 2007, ISBN 9780802825865.

Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament: A Contemporary Hermeneutical Method*, William B Eerdmans Publishing, 1999, ISBN 0802844499.

Sidney Greidanus, *Sola Scriptura: Problems and Principles in Preaching Historical Texts*, Wedge Publishing Foundation, Toronto, Canada, 1970, ISBN 0889061033.

Geerhardus Vos, *Grace and Glory: Sermons Preached in the Chapel of Princeton Theological Seminary*, The Banner of Trust, 1922, 1994, ISBN 01663711585.

Subtopics in Biblical Theology

Some Important Semester Dates

Classes begin	January 30
Final Drop/Add Day	February 6
Incompletes for Fall Due	March 1
Incompletes for January Term Due	April 1
Registration deadline for Summer Term 2012	April 23
Easter Break	April 2-8
The Spring Whitesides/Robinson Conference	April 18-19
Senior Day	April 30
Classes end on campus	May 4
Exam week on campus	May 7-10

Seminary Policies Link for Students:

Click this link and read carefully as a part of this course syllabus contract:

http://seminary.erskine.edu/content_policies/SeminaryPoliciesforETSStudents.pdf

Select Bibliography

I will be enhancing this bibliography throughout the winter and spring and will update the syllabus with each improved bibliography. ☺ In the first week of January I will include all the readings for the semester.

For those who wish to get a head start we will begin with Michael Lawrence and Al Wolters. ☺