

Erskine Theological Seminary  
DN 905 FJ Appropriating Old Testament Theology for Ministry  
Fall 2008

Fort Jackson Saturdays: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
9/13, 10/11, 11/8, 12/13

3 Credit Hours  
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**Office Hours for Fall 2008:** Tuesday 10:00-11:00; Wednesday 3:00-5:00; Thursday 10:00-11:00; Friday 3:00-5:00. My normal office hours are printed in this syllabus. However, due to meetings and unforeseen circumstances that may arise, my schedule may change. Other times by appointment, before or after class sessions. ☺ Breakfast or lunch discussions are also encouraged. Scheduling appointments is recommended but not required. Scheduling an appointment may be advantageous for those traveling a distance.

### **Course Description**

#### **DN 905FJ APPROPRIATING OLD TESTAMENT THEOLOGY FOR MINISTRY**

This course introduces students to the foundational role of Old Testament theology. Students focus on the history of this discipline, crucial interpretive figures, continuities and discontinuities between the Testaments, major theological themes, and how Christians can faithfully appropriate and apply Old Testament theology to the New Testament and New Covenant realities. Students give attention to how Old Testament theology provides context and content for the New Testament's message, gospel preaching, and Christian life.

Elective. Three hours.

### **Course Objectives**

- To better understand the history of discussion (and disagreements) of the purpose, goals and methodology of Old Testament Theology, especially from the Reformation to the modern period. This will include the issue of whether there is a center to the OT, i.e., is there one single theological theme that ties all of the Old Testament and Scripture as a whole together?
- 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 the 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?).
- To better understand both the *diversity* of God's revelation and the *unity* of his plan. All of God's revelation tells a unified story of creation, fall, redemption and consummation which expresses the one will and one purpose of the one God.
- To aid the students in continuing to deepen their comprehension and appropriation of the Old Testament and Old Testament Theology in their preaching, teaching and theological thought. Time and discussion will also be spent on how Christians can faithfully appropriate and apply Old Testament theology to the New Testament and New Covenant realities
- To better understand what has been 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 the Old Testament is the key to understanding the New Testament and how Old Testament theology interconnects with and enriches our understanding of Christ and his Gospel.
- To better understand how indispensable the content and perspectives of the Old Testament are to providing both content and context to the New Testament. The New Testament (and Jesus himself) constantly comes to us wrapped in the Old Testament in order that we can understand and apply it properly.
- The personal dimension. As Calvin 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 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 his Kingdom. Since only 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 the *Confessions* "Lord, you have made us for yourself and our hearts are restless until they find rest in you." This means that we will frequently discuss what the ecclesial 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 Old Testament Scripture and the Gospel should also result in our greater love for and commitment to Father, Son and Spirit and his people, the church.

- To give students the opportunity for significant input regarding questions, content and issues that they want us to think through together and sustained opportunities for discussion together.
- To introduce students to some of the major Old Testament theologians and their work to help them continue to more accurately and ministerially appropriate the Old Testament in their preaching, teaching and thinking.
- To aid students in continuing to develop graduate level biblical and theological analysis, research skills, rhetorical skills in discussion, critical thinking and evaluation, reading, writing and conversational skills.

## Required Textbooks

Gerhard Hasel, *Old Testament Theology: Basic Issues in the Current Debate Revised and Expanded Fourth Edition*<sup>1</sup>, 1991, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, ISBN 080280537X. \$20.00 list price, \$13.60 at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com), \$13.00 at Westminster Bookstore <http://www.wtsbooks.com>.

Bruce K. Waltke with Charles Yu, *An Old Testament Theology: An Exegetical, Canonical and Thematic Approach*, Zondervan, 2007, ISBN 0310218977. \$44.99 list, \$29.24 at Westminster Bookstore <http://www.wtsbooks.com>. \$29.69 at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com), \$32.84 at Eisenbrauns <https://www.eisenbrauns.com>.

Christopher J. H. Wright, *Salvation Belongs to the Lamb: Celebrating the Bible's Central Story*, IVP Academic, 2007, ISBN 9780830833061. \$16.00, \$13.60 at [www.eisenbrauns.com](http://www.eisenbrauns.com), \$12.00 <http://www.wtsbooks.com>, and \$10.88 at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com).

Some journal articles will be distributed and discussed.

## Course Requirements

Students will come to class having read and thought through the readings for each class and ready to theologically discuss and ministerially apply their insights. Students will write a 15-20 page research paper on an appropriate topic for Old Testament Theology, a written 3-5 page sermon demonstrating a faithful appropriation of an Old Testament text for Gospel ministry, and thoughtful, insightful informed discussion in class.

## 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

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<sup>1</sup> Be careful to only buy the fourth edition and not an earlier one when ordering.

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.

### **Rules of Engagement in Class Discussion<sup>2</sup>**

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. Thinking about Old Testament Theology involves thoughtful, disciplined and creative inquiry into the discipline. Such learning and thinking about ministry 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, his Kingdom and Scripture, 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 assignments, the biblical text 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.
- 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.

### **Seminary Policies Related to Research Papers**

**Inclusive Language:** The Seminary encourages all students to make use of language, in reference to human beings, that is inclusive rather than needlessly exclusive. It is a mark of a good communicator to build bridges rather than barriers; therefore, such language should be used in all written work and oral presentations. The Seminary Catalog stands as an example of recommended usage.

### **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

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<sup>2</sup> These rules represent a slightly modified version of Dr. John Wingard’s rules. I’d like to thank my generous friend and former colleague for sharing them with me.

language that clearly includes both men and women (for example, by saying/writing "humanity" rather than "man" or "people" rather than "men").

**Style and Bibliographical Formatting Requirements:** For the research paper, students are required to follow the form and style guidelines found in Turabian, *Manual for Writers* (7<sup>th</sup> edition). These guidelines are summarized in the Erskine Seminary document "Style and Form Standards for all Masters Level Programs," (Erskine Seminary). All papers must be typed/processed (twelve point type, double spaced, one-inch margins) and fully documented. In this course, footnotes and an appropriate bibliography are required in each paper. The paper's cover page and bibliography are not counted towards page requirements.

### **Official Seminary Plagiarism Policy:**

Plagiarism is the use in writing of wording or ideas produced by others without crediting the author and/or source from which the material was taken. As the following statement indicates, plagiarism is a serious offense that undermines both the witness and integrity of the Christian community:

*Plagiarism injures the community by inhibiting the recognition and cultivation of gifts imparted by the Spirit. Clearly unattributed use of the words and/or ideas of others fails to give appreciative recognition of their gifts. But this illegitimate appropriation of the gifts of others also blocks the recognition and cultivation of the actual gifts of the person engaged in plagiarism.*

*Plagiarism creates an atmosphere of falsehood in the community's discernment and cultivation of gifts, both within the Christian community and in God's larger creation. Since freedom comes only by way of truth (Jn. 8:32), such falsehood can only result in captivity, and therefore has no place in the Christian community.*

*On this basis, the Seminary adheres to the following general requirements for the acknowledgement of sources of academic work. These requirements apply to both print and electronic media.*

*1. Quotations. Any sentence or phrase that a student uses from another source must be placed in quotation marks or, in the case of longer quotations, clearly indented beyond the regular margin. Any quotation must be accompanied (either within the text or in a note) by a precise indication of the source.*

*2. Paraphrasing. Any material that is paraphrased or summarized must also be specifically acknowledged in a note or in the text.*

*3. Ideas. Specific ideas that are borrowed should be acknowledged in a note or in the text, even if the idea has been further elaborated by the student.*

*4. Bibliography. All the sources consulted in the preparation of an essay or report should be listed in a bibliography.*

*In addition to plagiarism, the following related practices are also unacceptable compromises of the truth requisite to a free community:*

*1. Multiple submission. Failure to obtain prior written permission of the relevant instructors to submit work which has been submitted in identical or similar form in fulfillment of any other academic requirement at any institution.*

*2. False citation. The deliberate attribution to, or citation of, a source from which the*

*material in question was not, in fact, obtained.*

*3. Submission of work done by someone else, either with or without that person's knowledge. Neither ignorance of the regulations concerning academic violations nor personal extenuating circumstances are an adequate defense against charges of plagiarism. The Seminary's provisions for "due process" apply in cases of alleged plagiarism.*

[The italicized statement above is used by permission of The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia and Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey, based upon a document adapted by LTSP, with permission, from "Princeton University Rights, Rules and Responsibilities," 1990 Edition. Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey.]

Occurrences of plagiarism shall be considered 'documented' when the instructor is able to produce documentary evidence that plagiarism has occurred, and when the instructor has reason to believe that the plagiarism was motivated by a deliberate attempt to receive credit for ideas or work not the student's own. Where such plagiarism involves the theft of the academic work of another student, whether at Erskine or any other institution, it shall be designated 'documented theft of another student's work.'

The instructor involved, in consultation with the Dean, may recommend measures deemed appropriate. In cases of documented plagiarism or documented theft of another student's work, the offending student will automatically receive the following penalties:

- Failure of the course(s) in which plagiarized or stolen work is submitted
- Dismissal from the Seminary for a minimum of one semester
- Forfeiture of the right to tuition refunds during the semester(s) affected

Before such penalties are imposed, a committee of at least three faculty members must agree that they are appropriate to the case. Appeals in such cases may only be addressed, in writing, to the President of Erskine College and Theological Seminary.

### **Evaluation:**

Students will write a 15-20 page research paper on an appropriate topic for Old Testament Theology, a written 3-5 page sermon demonstrating a faithful appropriation of an Old Testament text for Gospel ministry, and thoughtful, insightful informed discussion in class.

### **Grading Policy:**

Percentage of Work: paper 60% of grade, sermon 25% of grade and thoughtful, ministerial class 15%. The paper will take both form and content into consideration.

### **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		

### **Policy Regarding Absences for Four Session Classes**

Students are required to attend all class sessions. Students wishing to take a course which meets four times over the semester **must** attend the first meeting of the course. Students who cannot attend the first course meeting should not register for the course or, if already registered, should drop the course and complete the drop/add form. (If the drop/add form is not completed and turned in to the Registrar, the student will still be charged for the course and will receive an "F" grade.) If students have to be absent for part or all of another class meeting day, they are still responsible for all work missed and all work due. A student who misses as much as one full class day or its equivalent in late arrival or early departure should consult with the professor to see whether it is still possible to pass the course.

### **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.*

### **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."

All work is to be turned in on time. Any work that is turned in after the due date will be subject to at least a one grade penalty. Work that is significantly late, can at the teacher's discretion,

## **Class Schedule**

Class will meet on Saturday's from 9:00AM to 5:00PM with an hour's break for lunch.

Some journal articles will be distributed and discussed. I will provide more detail regarding the content of each meeting in the near future.

September 13

Hasel pages ix-138

Waltke pages 9-169

Wright pages 9-55

October 11

Hasel pages 139-208

Waltke pages 170-345

Wright pages 56-116

November 8

Waltke pages 346-653

Wright pages 117-137

December 13

Waltke pages 654-969

Wright pages 138-198