

TH502: Theology Survey II
Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, Charlotte
Dr. Don Fairbairn – Fall 2011

Professor's Contact Information:

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Schedule of Class Meetings: Monday evenings, 6:30 – 9:30 PM, Sept. 12 – Nov. 21
[no class on October 10 (Columbus Day)]

Catalog Course Description: A study of the person and work of Christ, predestination, conversion, justification, sanctification, and the work of the Holy Spirit; perseverance, the nature and mission of the church; sacraments, eschatology.

Course Purpose: This course, like its predecessor TH501, is designed to give students a basic and growing competence in the area of theology through careful consideration of the Bible's teaching on core Christian doctrines, the church's formulation of those doctrines in history, and the expression of those doctrines in the varied contexts of contemporary society.

Course Objectives: In keeping with Gordon-Conwell's mission statement, the professor intends that upon completing this course, students will:

1. Gain a mastery of biblical teaching on the doctrines covered in the course (article 1 of the mission statement).
2. Learn to think critically in analyzing various theological positions (article 2).
3. Develop their own positions on the doctrines studied and be capable of articulating and defending those positions and applying them to their own ministries (article 3).
4. Reflect on the implications of Christian doctrine for their own spiritual maturity, intimacy with Christ, character, and relationships inside and outside the church (article 4).
5. Consider the centrality of Christian doctrine for the development of a Christian and evangelical view of society (article 5).
6. Apply Christian doctrine to the church's tasks of missions, evangelism, discipleship, compassion, and justice (article 6).

The achievement of these objectives will be measured through three doctrinal papers, as detailed below.

Textbooks:

Fairbairn, Donald. *Life in the Trinity: An Introduction to Theology with the Help of the Church Fathers*. Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP Academic, 2009. (ISBN: 978-0830838738)

McGrath, Alister E. *Christian Theology: An Introduction*. Fifth Edition. Chichester, West Sussex, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011. (ISBN: 978-1444335149)

McGrath, Alister E. *The Christian Theology Reader*. Fourth Edition. Chichester, West Sussex, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011. (ISBN: 978-0470654842)

Requirements: This course will require at least 135 hours to complete. This total breaks down as follows:

Reading the three textbooks and other theological works of your choice	60 hours
Lectures and class discussions	30 hours
Three integrative doctrinal papers	45 hours

1. Reading (10 points; approximately 60 hours): You must complete 2000 pages of reading, including the following:

- McGrath, *Christian Theology*, pp. 265-347, 375-464. This reading will give you broad exposure to the issues and ideas of Christian theology.
- McGrath, *Christian Theology Reader*, pp. 219-338, 407-566. This reading will give you exposure to the range of the Church's thought throughout Christian history.
- Fairbairn, *Life in the Trinity*, pp. 108-233. This reading will assist you in understanding the professor's lectures and attune you to the ways a patristic perspective on theology can be helpful.
- The relevant portions of a modern or contemporary theology textbook of your choice, preferably from your own doctrinal tradition. See the list at the end of this syllabus for suggestions. This reading will give you a unified contemporary perspective on theology and will help you interact with the thought of your own tradition.
- At least one evangelical Protestant confessional statement, preferably from your own doctrinal tradition. Examples include the Augsburg Confession, the Second Helvetic Confession, the Belgic Confession, the Thirty-Nine Articles, the Scots Confession, the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Methodist Articles of Religion, and the Philadelphia Baptist Confession. Some of these may be found in Schaff, *The Creeds of Christendom* (vol. 3) or in Leith, *Creeds of the Churches*. They are also available on-line or in denominational publications. This reading will help you interact with the history of your tradition.
- Supplemental reading of your choice in order to assist you in preparing the integrative doctrinal papers. For example, you may want to read contemporary works on specific issues, such as the "Three Views on..." books. This reading will enable you to explore specific issues in more detail.

Overall, the reading for this course will give you the data you need to reflect, in light of Scripture, on the doctrines covered. The reading will thus constitute your preparation to write the doctrinal papers.

As you read, you must keep track of the books and pages you have read, and how long it has taken you to read each one. By Monday, December 19, you must upload a reading log to the Sakai site indicating which books and pages you have read, how long it has taken you to read each one, the total number of pages, and the total amount of reading time.

2. Integrative Doctrinal Papers (30 points each [90 points total]; approximately 15 hours each): You must reflect on the Bible's teaching and the reading (from requirement one) pertaining to each of the doctrines covered in the course and must compose three doctrinal papers. Each paper should be 10-12 pages in length.

Paper 1 will cover the Person and work of Christ and is due on Monday, Oct. 24.

Paper 2 will cover the Holy Spirit and salvation and is due on Monday, Nov. 14.

Paper 3 will cover the Church and eschatology and is due on Monday, Dec. 12.

For each of the integrative doctrinal papers, you must do the following:

- Decide an appropriate way to divide and organize the doctrines/issues covered under the broad topic.
- For each doctrine, succinctly summarize the relevant biblical teaching. (Use parenthetical references, not footnotes, when citing Scripture.) This will constitute evidence that you have met course objective no. 1 above.
- For each doctrine, interact with important statements from the history of the Church (early creeds, Reformation confessions, denominational doctrinal statements, or other historical materials presented by McGrath or the professor). This will constitute evidence that you have met course objective no. 2 above.
- For each doctrine, interact with contemporary issues from McGrath or your reading of a modern systematic theology textbook. This will constitute evidence that you have met course objective no. 2 above.
- For each doctrine, state your own belief clearly. This will constitute evidence that you have met course objective no. 3 above.
- For each doctrine, or in the conclusion of each doctrinal paper as a whole, reflect on the significance of your belief for your own devotion to Christ and for your ministry. This is a crucial portion of the assignment and will constitute evidence that you have met course objectives nos. 4-6 above.
- On the title page of each doctrinal paper, please indicate approximately how long it has taken you to complete it (not counting the reading time, which you are reporting in the reading log).

Please note that all written assignments should be prepared in MS-Word format (no pdf files, .dat documents, or Word Perfect documents, please). The assignments should be in Times New

Roman 12-point type, double spaced, with 1" margins on all sides of the page. Assignments must be uploaded to the Sakai site. Hard-copies will not be accepted.

Grading: The point values listed above mean that the total number of points available for the course is 100. Final letter grades will be applied with cutoffs as follows: A 95, A- 90, B+ 87, B 83, B- 80, C+ 77, C 73, C- 70, D+ 67, D 63, D- 60, F below 60. A grade of A+ will be given very rarely, when the student's work is truly exceptional. (At Gordon-Conwell, a grade of A+ and a grade of A are both counted the same way in calculating the student's GPA. Thus, a GPA above 4.0 is not possible.)

Late work: All late work will be penalized the equivalent of one letter grade per week beyond the due date, unless arrangements are made ahead of time. Extenuating circumstances will be considered as appropriate. Work turned in later than Wednesday, December 21 (one month after the final class meeting) will normally require that an extension be approved by the Seminary. If you anticipate a problem, contact the professor as soon as possible.

Class Schedule:

Sep. 12 – Introduction

Highlights from TH501
The Promise in Light of the Trinity

Sep. 19, 26 – Christ in Light of the Trinity

Initial Considerations
The Incarnation
The Person of Christ

Oct. 3 – The Work of Christ in Light of the Trinity

Christ's Work: As God and As Man
Christ's Prophetic Work
Christ's Priestly Work: The Atonement (Life, Death, and Resurrection)

Oct. 10 – No Class (Columbus Day)

Oct. 17 – The Holy Spirit in Light of the Trinity

The Person of the Holy Spirit
The Work of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament
The Work of the Holy Spirit in Christ's Life
The Holy Spirit and the Father-Son Relationship

Doctrinal paper 1 is due Oct. 24.

Oct. 24, 31 – Salvation in Light of the Trinity

What is salvation?

The Beginning of Salvation
The Holy Spirit, Election, and Saving Faith
The Initial Results of Union with God (adoption, justification, etc.)
The Continuing Results of Union with God (sanctification, perseverance)

Nov. 7, 14 – The Christian Church in Light of the Trinity

The Nature of the Church
The Mission of the Church
The Gifts of the Holy Spirit and the Church
Leadership in the Church
The Rites of the Church (Baptism, Lord's Supper)

Doctrinal paper 2 is due Nov. 14.

Nov. 21 – The End Times and the Trinity

The Kingdom of God
Christ's Return
The Descent of the Father
The Eternal State
Millennial and Tribulational Questions

Doctrinal paper 3 is due Dec. 12.

Reading log is due Dec. 19.

All late work is due Dec. 21.

Suggested Systematic Theology Texts:

Baptist/Evangelical

Millard Erickson. *Christian Theology*, 2nd ed. (Baker, 1998).

Gordon Lewis and Bruce Demarest. *Integrative Theology*. (Zondervan, 1996).

James Leo Garrett. *Systematic Theology: Biblical Historical and Evangelical*. 3rd ed., 2 vols. (Bibal Press, 2007).

Daniel L. Akin, ed. *A Theology for the Church*. (Broadman & Holman, 2007).

Dispensational

Charles Swindoll and Rob. Zuck, eds. *Understanding Christian Theology*. (Thomas Nelson, 2003).

Evangelical/Ecumenical/Methodist

Thomas C. Oden. *Systematic Theology*. 3 vols. (Hendrickson, 2006)

Lutheran

John Theodore Mueller. *Christian Dogmatics*. (Concordia Publishing House, 2003).

Pentecostal/Charismatic

J. Rodman Williams. *Renewal Theology*, 3 vols. (Zondervan, 1988).

Stanely M. Horton, ed., *Systematic Theology: A Pentecostal Perspective*. (Logion Press, 1994).

Guy P. Duffield and Nathaniel M. Van Cleave. *Foundations of Pentecostal Theology*. (Foursquare Media, 1983).

Presbyterian/Reformed

Robert Reymond. *A New Systematic Theology of the Christian Faith*. 2nd ed. (Thomas Nelson, 1998).

Louis Berkhof. *Systematic Theology*. (Eerdmans, 1938, reprint 1996).

James Montgomery Boice. *Foundations of the Christian Faith* (InterVarsity Press, 1986).

Weslyan/Holiness/Nazarene/Methodist

J. Kenneth Grider. *A Wesleyan-Holiness Theology*. (Beacon Hill Press, 1994).

H. Ray Dunning. *Grace, Faith & Holiness: A Wesleyan Systematic Theology* (Beacon Hill Press, 1988).